

FOUR-YEAR UNDERGRADUATE PERCUSSION CURRICULUM

by

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*In memory of my parents, Steve and Debbie Bowman*

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## **A Four-Year Undergraduate Percussion Curriculum**

The design and implementation of a four-year undergraduate percussion curriculum to serve the students who wish to pursue a professional career in performance and education is a flexible, living document that reflects a contemporary musical landscape. Incorporating multiple areas of percussion education, the curriculum is intended to serve as a guide for teachers in higher education to provide insight and organization in an artistic field. Contained within this curriculum is a structure and process that incorporates areas of snare drum, keyboard, timpani, drum set, hand drumming, and multiple percussion studies. These areas are intended to fully develop the percussion student by providing a well-rounded education that is balanced in course content and modes of instruction.

Within this percussion curriculum, students are exposed to multiple genres to build a solid musical foundation that will serve them as they continue to grow professionally. An additional consideration discussed within this document is the need for an education that will best serve the student in a contemporary musical landscape, as well as the various stakeholders within the degree granting institution, from administration to independent accrediting organizations for departments and schools of music. Finally, a curriculum of this design will allow the student to make informed decisions on potential areas of specialization as they continue to mature musically and professionally.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

The study of percussion within higher education is still one of the youngest areas to gain a footing in academia. Beginning in the early part of the twentieth century, the study of percussion has gained relevance within music education, aligning itself with instruments that have benefited from centuries of pedagogical, musical, and technical development. In this rise to garner a position among the ranks of piano, voice, string, and wind instruments there is a need to understand what we, as educators, deem valuable in an undergraduate education and what we should teach to the next generation of performers, composers, and educators. Prior to the development of a complete percussion program that we know of today, many percussion programs consisted of part-time teachers who focused on singular instruments. In an interview, George Gaber states, “There were places like Juilliard, New England, Baltimore, and Chicago conservatories that had teachers, but mostly taught only one percussion instrument.”<sup>1</sup> Beginning in the 1950’s, with more institutions hiring full-time dedicated teachers in percussion, the degree programs which we know today began to take shape through the work of educators such as Paul Price at the University of Illinois, who is credited with “establishing the first accredited college percussion ensemble course.”<sup>2</sup>

The musical and pedagogical landscape in percussion has changed throughout the twentieth century, and a contemporary percussion education should be one that reflects the teaching and performing environment that students will face as they navigate a

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<sup>1</sup> Gaber, George. "My Playing and Teaching Careers." *Percussive Notes* 44, no. 3 (June 2006): 54-63.

<sup>2</sup> Fairchild, Frederick. "PAS Hall of Fame." Paul Price. Accessed January 21, 2018.  
<http://www.pas.org/about/hall-of-fame/paul-price>.

potential career in performing and teaching. This translates into a percussionist who can be flexible and understanding of many performance practices, pedagogical adaptations, and musical situations. The contemporary percussionist should feel comfortable within musical genres from classical to non-western musical traditions. This is a requirement that percussionists face in a global musical world, and one that is more critical to our instrument.

The scope of this document will serve as an undergraduate curriculum for students who choose to pursue a degree in music where their primary instrument is percussion. Regardless of the degree path, the curriculum outline will serve as a tool for the student and teacher to focus on the vast and varied content within the percussion world. It will also provide a foundation for a curriculum that has breadth of subject matter and depth of content that can be altered and adapted to the individual based on strengths and weaknesses as the student refines their musical development.

With a lifetime of study that can be devoted to percussion, one has to address concerns of what to teach at the undergraduate level and to assess areas that are going to further develop the student to make informed choices as they refine their professional aspirations. This directly correlates to the idea of presenting a diverse or “well-rounded” percussion curriculum where many areas are explored and studied. There is a need to introduce new areas in percussion and to refine current musical and technical development across a broad spectrum of musical styles, instruments, and genres. In this author’s opinion, a curriculum at the undergraduate level should be one that is balanced and “well-rounded” to present many options to the student. While many professionals do specialize on specific areas of performance (drum set, marimba, timpani, orchestral),

percussionists at the undergraduate level should be presented with many different performance and teaching areas. Then as they grow and mature musically, they can begin to refine an area of specialization if they desire.

This does present challenges to the individual teacher on how to balance, create, and structure a curriculum that will present the varied musical material in a thoughtful manner and allow the student to gain a depth of knowledge throughout the subject areas. It is this author's belief that this can be achieved by finding common ground between diverse areas in technical and musical development to ensure that as focus in the applied lesson area shifts there is still full development and attention to all percussive genres. As focus areas shift within the curriculum, the content that is used throughout is one that will continuously develop the student and assist in advancing their technical skills and musical maturity.

With the undergraduate percussion program as a starting point for the young professional, the aspiration is to instill within all students a desire to further creativity, research, performance, education, and innovation in the field. It is important to present content that is meaningful to the education of the student, and reflective of the world in which they will perform and teach while also serving the needs of the community, administration, and music department within the institution. Curricular content within this document is representative of current materials and methods used in percussion education. As the field continues to grow and advance, content can be added or removed from the curriculum to best serve the student.

With the curriculum contained within this document, students will be able to build upon information they have gained throughout their undergraduate career to serve them

in the future, whether as an aspiring professional or through graduate studies. The goal for this program is to help foster creativity and reason in percussionists who are comfortable with many diverse musical genres and performance practices preparing them to face a musical world that is ever changing and allow them the opportunity to identify where and how they will be successful in their field.

## **Chapter 2: Identifying a Curriculum**

In attempting to define a percussion curriculum in higher education one first has to identify the intent of the curriculum structure and whom it serves. When creating a balanced curriculum at the undergraduate level, we are first aiming to serve the students and create a meaningful experience for them where they can develop and mature to function within a musical environment. With the student being at the center of the curriculum, there are additional stakeholders that we must identify and take into consideration when creating this document, including the teacher, the administration, and accreditation organizations for the university.

Identifying and defining a curriculum is an ever-changing process and one that reflects the shared musical landscape across a broad spectrum of musical and educational ideas. In order to define a percussion curriculum, we must also understand that the curriculum will reflect the environment and is a process to aid in the translation of abstract ideas into practical application through the process of instruction. It will also reflect the values that we, as educators, possess by defining areas to be included and excluded from the content. This is why the term “well-rounded” is used rather than “total” percussion education. There are certain elements that will have to be excluded or sacrificed to create a model that can be adapted for use in an undergraduate education.

In percussion education at the undergraduate level, decisions have to be made on topics to be discussed and how the information will be developed and related to the student. Within the percussion area there are a multitude of topics that can be studied from orchestral literature to music and traditions of non-western countries. A decision has to be made on what to teach and how relevant the content is to the student and the

environment in which they will live and work. Another contributing factor to this decision-making process lies with the teacher and her/his background. The teacher will use her/his experiences and expertise in making informed decisions on content and how to best work within the curriculum to present fully-formed ideas on an undergraduate education.

Curricular identity can take many forms. In structuring a broad perspective on a percussion education, the curriculum serves to identify the instructional content and outline a process that both the student and teacher can interact with and shape based on experience. With a focus on process we can see how it is also interconnected with the product. According to Estelle Jorgensen, “One without the other cannot suffice. Both process and product are essential for a broad grasp of the subject in question.”<sup>3</sup> The process is the journey that the student will undertake in the attempt to make meaning and understanding of a percussion education. How the student and teacher interact will determine the outcome.

This is where many will come to rest when defining a curriculum. It is the author’s rationale that content is a significant part of the curriculum but does not account for the entire picture as it generally removes the student from the equation. It does allow for the identity and transmission of concepts that are relevant to percussion performance and also allows us to transmit ideas and pedagogical approaches that have proved effective in percussion pedagogy. One must keep in mind however, that focus on content alone can run the risk of becoming too rigid and inflexible where interactions and student involvement can be limited. “It clearly does not suffice as the only useful image of

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<sup>3</sup> Jorgensen, Estelle. "Chapter 5: Philosophical Issues in Curriculum." In *Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning: A Project of the Music Educators National Conference*, 48-62. Oxford University Press, 2002.



curriculum because it fails to take sufficient account of the interrelatedness and dynamic quality of the various aspects of education and the inherent ambiguity between educational aims and methods.’<sup>24</sup>

Process in percussion education is akin to an education through immersion, learning how to think, listen, interpret, and analyze through the many genres in the percussion landscape in addition to creating a well-rounded, thoughtful individual. This is what lies at the core of this author’s percussion pedagogy. In the musical world, there are many different directions a student can travel, and with the cooperation of peers and educators the student will be armed with a vast wealth of knowledge to carry them down the path of professionalism in whichever field they choose.

In order to achieve these goals, the percussion program must be an atmosphere that embraces many different musical cultures, styles, and ideas. No idea, musically or pedagogically, should live in isolation, nor should it be disseminated to the student in isolation. It is the responsibility of the teacher to maintain a program that is diverse, productive, relevant, and active in the music community.

With the increasing demands of percussionists to be able to perform in many genres and musical styles this is a journey that can last a lifetime. It is my task to act as a guide for students to help build a deeper awareness of their personal artistic values and to further develop their musical sensitivity and maturity. Creating an awareness and appreciation of musical genres and cultures that may be unfamiliar to them will help in constructing a deeper appreciation of the percussion world and their professional goals as performers and educators.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid

## Chapter 3: Defining a Curriculum

A well-planned curriculum in applied percussion at the undergraduate level is essential for the development of students and for them to see the breadth of subject matter they will encounter over the course of their academic career. There are many factors surrounding the idea of a curriculum; what material is to be included and what has to be excluded, what should students know by the end of their undergraduate career, and what evaluative measures are needed to ensure that students are developing as musicians? The idea of a curriculum in this case is a construct that, according to Estelle Jorgensen, “implies the translation of general assumptions and beliefs about content into specific intentions and subsequent realities, that is, both intended and resultant curricula.”<sup>5</sup> Curriculum, in this regard looks at the structure of the percussion program as a whole, the goals and outcomes of direct study, and the methods and means of instruction that will be used in delivering the content.

When individuals initially hear the term curriculum there is an assumption that it is a discussion of only the material being taught, method books, etudes, solo repertoire, and excerpts. There is a sense of rigidity in a curriculum, where individual choice, experience, and goals are not taken into consideration in the structure. The goal of this undergraduate curriculum is to define areas of exploration, mastery of skills, artistic development, and musical maturity in many different areas of percussion performance and pedagogy.

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<sup>5</sup> Jorgensen, Estelle R. 1988. "The Curriculum Design Process in Music". *College Music Symposium*. 28: 94-105.

When developing a curriculum at the undergraduate level, there are many factors to consider; who is being taught and what do they tell us about their experience, what is the content material and what deciding factors establish specific course of study, and what does studio teaching and learning look like and how does it reflect the musical environment?

This presentation of an organized and sequential body of material will build upon technical proficiencies and grow students' musical sensitivity with the goal of enhancing the student as a performer, artist, and educator. Content within this curriculum is varied and not all material will be discussed to the same degree depending on the students' ability and their prior experiences.

An organized curriculum is necessary at the undergraduate level to develop the highest level of musicianship, performance, and pedagogy in each student. This presentation of materials will be different at each institution and the method of delivery will be different between teachers, but there is a commonality in all applied instruction; the master-apprentice or expert-novice relationship.

This relationship is throughout studio instruction regardless of instrument studied, and it is an important element within the social structure of the musical construct. According to Richard Kennell, “ applied music teachers are members of an important oral tradition in which personal experience and historical anecdote form the basis of contemporary common practice.”<sup>6</sup> While understanding that this relationship exists within the structure of applied instruction, there is also a need for order and guidance in

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<sup>6</sup> Kennell, Richard. "Toward a Theory of Applied Music Instruction." *Visions of Research in Music Education* 16, no. 3 (October 2010): 5-16.

the form of some written curriculum to guide the student through the myriad of technical instruction manuals, etude studies, and solo repertoire that currently exists.

When defining a curriculum in a subjective area such as music, one must first take into account the student and provide a body of work that will enable both the student and teacher to grow and develop. There are additional stakeholders within higher education who will benefit from a defined curriculum including department chairs, deans, and accreditation organization. In regard to the policy makers within higher education, this author is specifically looking at the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). This organization sets forth the standards for degree granting institutions of higher education and is the accrediting body for schools of music throughout the United States.

NASM has established guidelines of curricula that institutions of higher education must adhere to, and they have been delegated by the US Department of Education to oversee degree granting institutions. Reviewing the current handbook on accreditation by NASM, the curricula that is outlined does not go into specifics within each degree program. Rather than attempting to standardize curriculum, NASM provides the framework for the direction of music education in the twenty-first century. The NASM handbook states as its goal, “To establish threshold standards of achievement in music curricula without restricting an administration or school in its freedom to develop new ideas, to experiment, or to expand its program.”<sup>7</sup>

The basic standards that are outlined within the handbook do not convey specifics for a degree or concentration in percussion at the undergraduate level. They do however

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<sup>7</sup> National Association of Schools of Music. “National Association of Schools of Music Handbook.” *National Association of Schools of Music Handbook*, 2015, [nasm.arts-accredit.org/index.jsp?page=Standards-Handbook](http://nasm.arts-accredit.org/index.jsp?page=Standards-Handbook).

outline a “Common Body of Knowledge and Skills”<sup>8</sup> that encompass categories such as, performance, musicianship skills and analysis, composition/improvisation, history and repertory, and synthesis. While these areas are covered throughout the course offerings in an undergraduate degree program, they are in no way dictating the path to achieve these goals or provide specifics in the area of instruction. The modes of transferring information to the student are left to the discretion of the instructors and the academic unit itself. Many of these areas are covered in a percussion education at the undergraduate level in keeping with good practice and common sense within the confines of teaching music, and in this author’s opinion, many percussion educators would agree with this outline set forth by NASM:

*B. Common Body of Knowledge and Skills*

*1. Performance. Students must acquire:*

- a. Technical skills requisite for artistic self-expression in at least one major performance area at a level appropriate for the particular music concentration.*
- b. An overview understanding of the repertory in their major performance area and the ability to perform from a cross-section of that repertory.*
- c. The ability to read at sight with fluency demonstrating both general musicianship and, in the major performance area, a level of skill relevant to professional standards appropriate for the particular music concentration.*
- d. Knowledge and skills sufficient to work as a leader and in collaboration on matters of musical interpretation. Rehearsal and conducting skills are required as appropriate to the particular music concentration.*
- e. Keyboard competency.*

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid

- f. Growth in artistry, technical skills, collaborative competence and knowledge of repertory through regular ensemble experiences. Ensembles should be varied both in size and nature.*

The above outline from the NASM handbook provides the framework for discussing and creating a curriculum that fits with the twenty-first century musical landscape. It is our opportunity to transmit information and inspire students to continue growing as professional musicians as we see appropriate through our individual experiences and past instruction. The sections outlined within the NASM guidelines reflect much of the underlying work that is being done within the applied studio in regard to performance; technical development, representative repertoire, sight-reading, collaboration, and keyboard skills. The applied percussion curriculum presented in this document directly reflects the NASM standards and the overall structure of the undergraduate degree program aiding in the complete development of the student.

There are additional competencies listed within the NASM handbook that provide further insight into the curriculum that can and often are directly related to the applied teaching element of an undergraduate degree. Sections two and three list the following:

*2. Musicianship Skills and Analysis. Students must acquire:*

*a. an understanding of the common elements and organizational patterns of music and their interaction, the ability to employ this understanding in aural, verbal, and visual analyses, and the ability to take aural dictation.*

*b. Sufficient understanding of the capability with musical forms, processes, and structures to use this knowledge and skill in compositional, performance, analytical,*

*scholarly, and pedagogical applications according to the requisites of their specializations.*

*c. The ability to place music in historical, cultural, and stylistic contexts.*

### *3. Composition/Improvisation*

*Students must acquire a rudimentary capacity to create original or derivative music. It is the prerogative of each institution to develop specific requirements regarding written, electronic or improvisatory forms and methods. These may include but are not limited to the creation of original compositions or improvisations, variations or improvisations on existing materials, experimentation with various sound sources, the imitation of musical styles, and manipulating the common elements in non-traditional ways. Institutional requirements should help students gain a basic understanding of how to work freely and cogently with musical materials in various composition-based activities, particularly those most associated with the major field.* <sup>9</sup>

With this underlying structure within a degree program, one can see how the major field area will be impacted by the structure and content within the applied studio. All students within the percussion studio will experience these outcomes in their applied study through solo and chamber repertoire, orchestral excerpts, composition for percussion, improvisation and the development of general musicianship skills.

The idea of presenting a framework in percussion instruction is not new in percussion education. It has been examined by several Percussive Arts Society committees and individuals throughout the past thirty years. Kevin Clyde, based in the results of his survey addressed the question of the concept of a curriculum at the undergraduate level as follows: “In general, each survey respondent agrees with the

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid

concept of a curriculum. Most believe that it should function as a flexible outline that suits the needs of the individual while maintaining a formatted and structured environment.”<sup>10</sup> This general consensus in Clyde’s article shows that the concept and idea of a curriculum for the percussion student is needed as long as there is flexibility and room for exploration for the student and teacher.

A curriculum that is built around the teacher and not the student would be a disservice to the student and to the field of percussion. In the growing field of percussion education with a multitude of outcomes and possibilities, it is critical to emphasize what is important for a percussionist in the twenty-first century. According to John Beck, “A predetermined and dogmatic curriculum would do the student much harm. He is an individual and must be taught as an individual.”<sup>11</sup> With the intent of presenting an outline for a four-year program, we can identify where the student is currently and what the long-term goal will be after the program is finished.

Providing a curricular framework to work within the academy will serve to highlight aspects of the percussion program for university administration in order to be in compliance with the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) guidelines. Given the highly competitive nature of a career in music performance, providing a diverse and balanced education can demonstrate that the faculty recognize the challenges and the need to be a diverse musician in the twenty-first century. Providing this balance and breadth of study as the foundation of an education for future music teachers also provides the student with the necessary skills to thrive in public education. The structure

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<sup>10</sup> Clyde, Kevin. "General Issues Concerning Percussion Education at the Undergraduate Level" *Percussive Notes* 41, no. 3 (June 2003): 28-31.

<sup>11</sup> Beck, John H. "Standardized Percussion Curriculum." *National Association of College Wind and Percussion Instructors Journal* 18, no. 4 (Summer 1970): 8-9.



of the undergraduate curriculum is one that strives for balance in the study of snare drum, keyboard, timpani, and drum set with additional areas in “world percussion,” multiple percussion, and accessory instruments. This may seem like an unachievable task given the undergraduate career of four years, but without structure one can spend a great deal of time focusing on a single area of percussion or even a specific genre within an instrument’s performance practice.

With the goal of creating a well-rounded musician, the content contained within this curriculum will cover a broad spectrum of percussion genres including marimba/keyboard literature, orchestral, rudimental, multiple percussion, jazz, and world percussion. Building upon this foundation, the content covered reflects what the percussion community sees as valuable for a percussionist who will be performing, composing, and teaching within the Western world. As stated previously, this is an attempt to provide a balanced and well-rounded education for the student. To use the phrase “total percussion” would not be accurate because it is impossible to present the enormous magnitude of the percussion world to a student in four years.

In addition to being a document for the student, it is also a structural diagram for the teacher to organize and effectively manage their area within the school of music. The overall design of the program is based on the assumption that there will be a single percussion teacher within the percussion area. It takes into consideration the many varying areas of percussion and draws parallels and intersections in the material that will be covered. An example of this can be found in the relation of rudimental drumming to drum set studies and the study of multiple percussion solos that utilize many divergent instruments to create one “new” instrument or voice within the percussion repertoire.

Intersections can also be linked through orchestral styles and studies on the snare drum through solos, etudes and orchestral excerpts.

The intention here is a framework where the student can see how the percussion world is integrated. While some specific music and cultures may not be studied to the same degree, having an appreciation, acknowledgement, and understanding of a multitude of instruments throughout the world will provide the foundation to pursue a lifetime of study. In an article published by the National Association of College Wind and Percussion Instructors (NACWPI), John Galm addresses this issue stating:

“obviously, it is impossible to include the study of all of these instruments from various parts of the world in a four-year course of study... but, to ignore this study of “world percussion” seems to be an even greater loss in today’s world of rapid communication.”

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Percussionists today need to be highly diverse and aware of different musical cultures and styles. As musical genres blend and borrow from each other, they begin to assume their own identity, and it is usually the role of the percussionist to be the musical and cultural ambassador in the communication of this musical styling. This is why there is an emphasis on being a well-rounded percussionist who understands and appreciates diverse musical styles and cultures.

This curriculum uses the background and previous experience of the student as a starting point to continue their development in other areas and provides them the opportunity to develop and enhance skill sets that have not yet been experienced in the world of percussion education. Most, if not all students will have varying degrees of

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<sup>12</sup> Galm, John K. "On Teaching Applied Percussion." *National Association of College Wind and Percussion Instructors Journal* 19, no. 3 (Spring 1971): 15-18.

experience on specific instruments in percussion, and not every student will be at the same level of musical development.

The structure outlined within this document is one that can be varied based on student strengths and proficiency. It is by no means prescriptive. The content can be altered based on achievement and mastery of skills within specific areas based on student performance, evaluation and faculty recommendation. This is a living, breathing, document that can and should be amended as appropriate by adding, removing, or altering based on new material or methods.

Having this approach in teaching provides me with the opportunity to become a better teacher and musician as I search for new experiences and how they can relate to the education of my students. The desire to constantly seek opportunities and create opportunities can serve as a model for the student in the percussion studio. Maintaining an outline that is a flexible document will provide an opportunity for a rich and engaging educational experience for all involved.

## Chapter 4: Philosophical Assumptions

Defining a curriculum for an undergraduate percussion program is the first step for teachers in deciding how the program will be structured and what the students should know. The curricular decisions made during this process take into consideration the multiple opportunities available to the students and how their education is a reflection of the professional world. The philosophy of a curriculum will address overall concerns, limitations, direction of the program and whom it serves.

In this author's opinion, there are four areas that serve as the philosophical foundation for this curriculum design. The first area is to recognize that an undergraduate curriculum cannot include everything. Decisions have to be made on what to include in the curriculum that will best serve the needs of the students and how it relates to the professional world. The decision is primarily based on the experience and training of the percussion teacher. Students who will be performing and teaching in the United States should be confident with the instruments and the musical genres they will encounter.

The second area is for the teacher to address or at least acknowledge the variety of instruments, genres, and styles that will not be included in the undergraduate education. Cort McClaren addressed some of these concerns in regard to teaching stating, "life before the mid 1970's was simple compared to the complex array of ideas that kaleidoscope through the channels of communication today."<sup>13</sup> With this statement, McClaren is addressing the difficulty that modern percussion teachers face with incorporating and presenting a percussion education that is much more diverse covering

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<sup>13</sup> McClaren, Cort A. "Reaching Consensus." *The Journal of Percussion Pedagogy* 1, no. 1 (October 2008): 12-14.

many topics in addition to marimba, snare drum, and timpani. It is not practical for a teacher to create a curriculum and course of study that includes all areas within percussion. Having an appreciation and understanding of the areas not included within the curriculum are still valuable to the percussion world. The ability to recognize and have access to resources in these areas outside of the curriculum is an invaluable tool for percussion educators to possess.

The third area to recognize is that all areas are interrelated. When creating a balance within a curriculum, it is important to understand the technical and musical elements that are shared and can transfer to other instruments. This ability to discover concepts that are transferrable can lead to an effective and efficient mode of instruction that can relate to other areas that are not discussed in depth. Identifying the significance of these interrelated areas will help insure the importance of a well-rounded education. One way this can be achieved is through the study of many pedagogical books and solo percussion literature currently available to the percussion professional and student, to show the many instances where the study of one instrument is applicable to different styles.

The fourth area in the design of this curriculum is the method of instruction. A differentiated instruction for individual students, in this author's opinion, is the ideal method for instruction. Crafting a course of study that is unique for each student will provide exposure to a variety of material and allow for an individualized approach to work on content that serves the students' needs. The method of instruction will vary depending on the teacher, university, and the goals of the program.

In reviewing published percussion studio handbooks and curricula from undergraduate programs, this author specifically looked at the philosophy to see where the emphasis was for the percussion program, and to see encouragement for either a well-rounded percussion education or one that was more specialized. The University of Missouri percussion department under its applied lesson philosophy states “applied percussion studies are designed to develop the highest level of musicianship, performance, and teaching skills appropriate to the curriculum for each student.”<sup>14</sup> The program at the University of Missouri, Columbia presents a well-rounded program with an emphasis on performance and education for all students. The Minnesota State University, Moorhead percussion program places an emphasis on a “well-rounded” percussion education stating, “In order to prepare you for a successful career in the business, performance, and/or pedagogy of music, I have worked to create a program that will stretch you not only as a percussionist, but will challenge you to become a well-rounded musician, as well.”<sup>15</sup> The program at the University of Arizona states a similar purpose, “Percussion studies at The University of Arizona are designed to develop in the percussionist the highest possible level of musicianship and an appropriate competency in performance and teaching.”<sup>16</sup>

The three programs that were examined place an emphasis on a well-rounded percussion education with a focus on the student as an individual who will have unique

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<sup>14</sup> Gaines, Julia. "University of Missouri Percussion Handbook." University of Missouri School of Music. February 2016. Accessed January 2, 2018. [https://music.missouri.edu/sites/default/files/area-file/mu\\_percussion\\_handbook.pdf](https://music.missouri.edu/sites/default/files/area-file/mu_percussion_handbook.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> Williams, Kenyon. "University of Minnesota, Moorhead Percussion Studio Handbook." Accessed January 8, 2018. [https://www.mnstate.edu/uploadedFiles/Level\\_2/Content/Academics/Music/Studio-Handbook.pdf](https://www.mnstate.edu/uploadedFiles/Level_2/Content/Academics/Music/Studio-Handbook.pdf).

<sup>16</sup> Weinberg, Norman. *University of Arizona Percussion Studies Handbook*. August 8, 2014. University of Arizona, Tucson.

interests and goals with obtaining a degree in music. All three programs recognize the importance of being a musician who is multi-faceted and comfortable with the intense study, analysis, performance, and pedagogy in percussion. The potential ability to refine and develop the skills outlined in their department handbooks affords the student a greater opportunity to be successful in a field that contains many variables.

In addition to the programs mentioned, there are examples of undergraduate percussion programs that employ a well-rounded approach, however, the course content and instruction is identical for all students. The University of North Texas (UNT) provides a structure in their percussion program where all students, regardless of degree program, will work on the same body of material. According to their department manual, “This manual of procedure is intended to be a guide for UNT percussionists majoring in: percussion applied performance, jazz studies or music education, and other concentration areas including theory, composition, and musicology.”<sup>17</sup> It is noted that regardless of degree objective, the percussion department has established minimum standards for all percussionists. While this author agrees with their assertion of creating minimum standards, the method of achieving these standards appear to limit the student in their discovery. Using the snare drum course syllabus as an example, the snare drum curriculum is divided into three sections, deficient, Level I, and Level II. Within these levels, weekly assignments are predetermined for each semester, and course content is determined along with performance tempos. While this may be an efficient method of instruction for the transmission of information, there is a limitation to creating an

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<sup>17</sup> "Percussion | College of Music." Student Resources | Percussion | College of Music. Accessed February 27, 2018. <https://percussion.music.unt.edu/student-resources>.

individualized approach to instruction within a highly structured format. Additionally, this design could limit the instructor in altering and structuring a program based on the individual student, their abilities, and their professional goals. Having an outline of course objectives and materials allows the student to be part of the process and provides the opportunity for the student to create her/his individual voice.

The University of Central Florida (UCF) percussion curriculum applies a similar structure as The University of North Texas, where weekly lesson assignments are predetermined within the course syllabus. The content within the program at UCF does provide a more diverse range of etude and solo repertoire appropriate for the student. This allows for the opportunity to design a course of instruction that will work for the individual while still maintaining progressive steps in achievement throughout their undergraduate career. The UCF percussion handbook addresses this concern by stating, “although the documents appear to be rigid in their structure, flexibility is an important component to successful applied instruction, requiring an individual approach in its application.”<sup>18</sup>

What is the goal of a percussion education at the undergraduate level and how do we achieve this goal? This question is central to many percussion students and teachers. With the vast changes in the music industry from the end of the twentieth century to the present, it is not easy to simply “perform” without a clear indication of what the musical landscape is like and what requirements are placed upon percussionists today. With this change in the professional music field, students today are faced with challenges that

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<sup>18</sup> University of Central Florida, College of Arts and Humanities, Matthew Dunn, Bryce Jackson. "Percussion." UCF Music Department. Accessed February 28, 2018. <http://music.cah.ucf.edu/percussion.php>.



many percussionists in previous generations did not face. With shrinking professional orchestras, limited opportunity for studio work, and an increase in the number of percussionists in the field, having a diverse skill set will help students begin their professional career or continue on to graduate studies. However, professional and career development are not the only goals in crafting a curriculum. It is only one part of the overall goal for educators to assist their students in making decisions and providing them the skills for creating opportunities where they may not exist.

In percussion pedagogy, there are two main intersections that a teacher works with, process and the product. While some may consider the product (the performer/educator) to be the ultimate goal in music education, in this author's opinion, the process is of equal importance. Cultivating a creative performer, teacher, and thinker in music education is all part of the process with the experiences having more impact on the student than the sole act of performance. For the percussion student, these intersections of education will serve them well into their professional career and prepare them for a lifetime of learning and exploration. As with all education, learning does not end when students exit their academic institution. What we are attempting to provide are the tools for students to continue searching for experiences and the ability to use them to find meaning in what they do in life. In addition to teaching them how to play, we are providing them with the skills to be able to communicate effectively, work cooperatively, and build meaning through music education and percussion performance.

In addition to performance preparation, all students should be aware of the pedagogical aspects of percussion education. Many percussionists may have the opportunity to teach in some capacity, through direct contact or through their own

performance. The ability to teach and explain concepts, ideas, and demonstrate for students is essential. The ability to work, teach, and perform effectively take root in a solid foundation in percussion pedagogy where the student can think critically and be able to explain actions that can be related to other percussionists.

In the twenty-first century, the musical landscape has changed and percussion pedagogy does not have to be a rigid, formulaic method in the study of Western classical music. While the study of orchestral literature is still an important element of percussion pedagogy, there are many other styles and genres that have entered the curriculum. As stated previously, knowing that there are many different forms of percussion performance and education will provide students with more opportunities to perform different genres. Using available resources for the benefit of students will provide many avenues for them to learn as much as possible about the art of percussion.

## **Chapter 5: Teaching Methods and Content**

The content design within the undergraduate curriculum aims to fulfill multiple facets of a contemporary musical landscape. Creating a curriculum with the intent to recognize the diverse demands on a percussionist provides an opportunity to learn and explore areas both inside and outside of the Western classical tradition that are now recognized as essential for a percussionist performing and teaching in the twenty-first century.

Snare drum, keyboard, timpani, and drum set studies serve as the primary foundations of the curriculum where fundamentals in technical proficiency and musical development will take shape. In addition to this, foundational studies in non-western percussion, contemporary multiple percussion literature, and accessory percussion instruments create a more complete picture of the undergraduate education. In a highly diverse society I believe that musicians should reflect the world in which they live and interact. Providing the students with the necessary skills to be a diverse and self-sustaining musician are essential tools needed given the ever-changing musical world.

Regardless of the specific area of instruction there are factors within the instructional process that are central to the students' development:

1. Technical facility
2. Musical interpretation and expression
3. Performance preparation
4. Sight reading and aural development
5. Composition and improvisation
6. Historical and pedagogical context

These six factors serve to fully develop the student during their undergraduate studies and continue into their professional career. The instruments and genres studied within the

curriculum will serve to develop these skills and foster growth and musical maturity in students as they enter the professional world.

Developing the ability to work with diverse musicians in conventional and unconventional settings is a construct that has become a part of the musical landscape and, in this authors opinion, something that should be reflected in what and how we teach at the undergraduate level. Allowing the students to participate in the process of performing and teaching will further their musical and inter-personal skills.

Additionally, within this curriculum students will explore a great breadth of musical genres to highlight the vast opportunities within performance and education one can pursue. Students at the undergraduate level will experience performing contemporary, classical, jazz, non-western, and popular music, providing them an opportunity to explore and discover before deciding on an area of specialization for a professional career or graduate studies. For those who do not pursue advanced degrees, this approach provides them with an arsenal of knowledge that will allow them to be successful in a professional environment.

This “well-rounded” percussion approach is something that has been discussed and debated for several decades in percussion education, and much of the discussion has centered around the idea of including the study of instruments that do not fall into the western classical tradition. In George Gaber’s reflections on his career he states, “I felt true percussion education should expose the student to a full palette of percussion education including concert, opera, ballet, jazz, ethnic, African, and Brazilian music.”<sup>19</sup> Percussionists are often tasked to be the musical interpreters of different styles and genres

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<sup>19</sup> Gaber, George. "My Playing and Teaching Careers." *Percussive Notes* 44, no. 3 (June 2006): 54-63.

within Western music. The music students will encounter repertoire for hand drums, non-western instruments, and complete drum set parts, in addition to standard percussion instruments found in bands and orchestras. For the student, having the knowledge and skill set in multiple areas, and being able to perform the music in a meaningful way will be critical to their success.

Providing this balance will allow the student to make informed decisions as they continue to develop their own areas of specialization. Many teachers and performers have an area of specialization in their professional career that they feel a strong connection with and spend a lifetime developing. Many of these artists also have the knowledge in all areas of percussion and have made an informed decision on what to pursue as professionals. According to Tom Morgan, “The increasing number of specialty performers has not changed the fact that the undergraduate percussion student still is faced with the task of developing a “total percussion” competency.”<sup>20</sup> This is a call for students at the undergraduate level to have confidence and competency across the percussion spectrum that will allow them to narrow their area of specialization as they develop as professionals.

This is not a call to abandon the teaching of what has been traditional instruction within higher education, but a call for balance within the curriculum. This can be accomplished by finding areas of intersection within our instruments so that the student is able to function within the musical world on the stage or in the classroom. The ability to relate and connect different genres and instruments will aid in a faster overall development of the percussionist and provide them with a greater appreciation of an

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<sup>20</sup> Morgan, Tom. "Drumset in the University Percussion Curriculum." *Percussive Notes* 32, no. 3 (June 1994): 70-75.

inter-connected musical world where borders are broken and the integration of techniques and performance practice are shared among the instruments.

The content outlined within this document serves to create a framework for the undergraduate student to experience the multitude of instruments, genres, styles, and performance practices we face in the percussion world. With the sheer volume of information and skills required of the percussion student and teacher within an undergraduate program, there has to be a discussion of how a student obtains a meaningful experience in areas that are highly diverse and often specialized. Providing a course of study for the undergraduate student with the intent to guide them through musical genres that most other musicians do not have to encounter is something unique and challenging to the percussion world. Finding balance and common ground among all areas will better prepare us to provide a more comprehensive education that is reflective of a contemporary musical world.

While much of the discussion has been centered on the one-on-one applied lesson within the curriculum, there are additional components that are integrated into the curriculum to provide a greater impact on the educational process. One area that can be used for additional teaching opportunities that directly relate to the applied studio is the percussion ensemble. A course in chamber music creates a platform as a way to communicate ideas of technique, sound production, and performance skills involving visual and aural communication between performers. Using the percussion ensemble as a chamber performance group and a lab will reinforce essential performance skills that will benefit students in their applied lessons as well as their large ensembles within the music school. The chamber setting within a percussion ensemble is where the student can hone

their skills with uncommon instruments that have been incorporated into the percussion world. This is where the student can work with their peers in developing chamber playing skills such as listening, working without a conductor, and learning to play instruments that are “found objects” in percussion literature. The percussion ensemble also enables the student to be a leader within the group, organize rehearsals, and work cooperatively with other students that are at varying levels of proficiency. Percussionists must learn how to interact and react to other performers in many different musical environments from contemporary chamber ensembles to “world” music groups. In addition to the applied lessons and ensemble component, the studio class also serves as a teaching platform where common themes, techniques, and insight on musical interpretation can be addressed.

The studio class is a weekly group class for the entire percussion studio with the intent on sharing ideas and providing an outlet for additional educational opportunities. This author’s concept of the studio class is that it should serve as an open forum where ideas are shared among all the percussionists. Every student should have an active role in the process, from group sessions on orchestral instrument techniques and performance practice, to world music topics. The studio class is an opportunity to provide an additional learning and performance environment that is shared by everyone. It also provides an outlet as an additional performance opportunity for the students and an assessment tool that allows the teacher to track progress of the students throughout the semester and to better prepare them for public performances. In addition to using a classroom format to provide instruction, this is also a forum for the students to gain

experience performing for their peers, providing and accepting constructive criticism, and presenting percussion topics based on student research.

Including multiple opportunities for an educational experience within the percussion program affords the ability to address larger issues and required skill sets that go beyond the confines of the applied lesson and will aid in the student's overall success as a professional. Providing the forum of a weekly studio class that serves as an educational outlet also provides an opportunity to discuss technical advances and ideas that are shared not only among percussionists but also among all students of music in the twenty-first century. Addressing these areas such as technology, literature, and pedagogy can reinforce the value and importance of these areas along with the performance aspect.

Music technology is an area that has had considerable impact on the collegiate experience and is now beginning to be addressed in a university curriculum. While there are courses that will cover general topics of technology in teaching and performing, having a focused discussion and practical application directly integrated into the major field will serve all students for teaching or preparation for auditions. This is becoming more commonplace in many percussion studios, but has been an area that is slow to develop. According to the survey conducted by Kevin Clyde, "technology based percussion is an area in which many programs are lacking. Only eight of the programs [surveyed by Clyde] have technology requirements."<sup>21</sup> While the inclusion of technology has increased from the time of his survey there are still areas of improvement that can be made. Structuring areas of technology into opportunities outside the applied lesson time

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<sup>21</sup> Clyde, Kevin. "General Issues Concerning Percussion Education at the Undergraduate Level." *Percussive Notes* 41, no. 3 (June 2003): 28-31.



will enable the students and teacher to discover opportunities on its use and additional ways it can be applied to teaching and performing.

Ideas of technology within the applied curriculum can expand to areas of self-recording, record keeping, and personal and time management within the percussion studio. It is now a necessary tool for teachers and students in order to remain competitive in the music world. Technology within the applied studio can come in many forms. The most often used and practical application is the recording of lessons and rehearsals, which gives the teacher and student the ability to recall material discussed within the lesson for review and preparation for the following lesson. With many cloud-based storage options available, these files can be shared and uploaded for the student immediately following the lesson and can be recalled from laptop, tablet, or smart phone devices. Since students are more connected digitally, this is another opportunity to connect and collaborate with them in a medium they are familiar with and use in their daily lives. In addition to audio forms, video is also a powerful tool that is often used to show musical, technical, and even extra-musical ideas and gestures that may be affecting the students' performance.

Applying many modes to transmit information and communicate with the students provides a multi-faceted approach to percussion pedagogy within the applied studio. Engaging with the students on different levels with different modes of transmission affords the opportunity to reach the student on their level and in their world. When the applied curriculum lives within the academic and personal life of the student, the ability to engage becomes stronger. When the idea and thought is personal with the student, it becomes part of them and encourages a sense of discovery. The opposite may be true if the curriculum were to live in isolation from the remaining areas of academic study or

outside of students' personal lives. Connecting the student with the many facets of percussion that we face in the twenty-first century builds a relationship among our differing instruments and helps the students understand that all the facets of percussion are interrelated.

## Chapter 6: Process and Evaluation

In a time when assessment and evaluation are permeating education, having a structured concept of evaluation for students within the applied studio is crucial. For the benefit of the students and administration, providing consistent feedback within the applied lessons will give validity to the curriculum, track growth, and provide accurate record-keeping for administration.

To begin any journey with a student, it is crucial to find out where they are currently, what their goals are (long and short-term), and what the measurable steps are that can be put in place to achieve these goals. This process should take place each semester as part of planning the direction of the applied lessons. Students will begin their academic careers with a certain set of ideas and goals but these can, and often do, change. By setting goals and working through the process of evaluation over time, students will begin to see what steps are necessary to fully develop their careers. Angela Myles Beeching, author of *Beyond Talent* states, “Careers are developed over time...and long-term career goals are realized through everyday choices about the use of time, energy, and money.”<sup>22</sup> While aiding students in creating and identifying long-term goals, it is necessary to identify the steps they should take to achieve these goals.

Applied lesson goals and objectives for each semester will aid in setting the content for the applied lessons and the focus for the student and teacher. With this approach, we are enabling the student to have a say in the curriculum and to be in control of what will be achieved throughout the semester with guidance by the teacher. James P.

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<sup>22</sup> Beeching, Angela Myles. *Beyond talent: creating a successful career in music*. New York: Oxford Univ. Pr., 2010.

Doyle's article, *Goal Setting in the Applied Percussion Lesson* discusses the steps in goal setting with each student, "Often it is easier for students to envision a long-term goal than it is to learn to define short-term goals. This is when mentoring becomes an integral part of the process. When reviewing goals with students, I assist them in creating goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, and process-based." <sup>23</sup>

Goal setting and outlining objectives with the student will provide greater insight into her/his thoughts and provide a better framework to work within their aspirations. Once the measurable goals have been established, it will provide the applied lesson with a structure where the student can see marked improvement in the short term and provide motivation for her/him to continue working toward their long-term goals. This also provides the teacher with concrete methods for evaluation that are set for the semester and for goals that can be set on a weekly basis. Students who are receiving feedback on these process-based goals will be able to organize themselves and incorporate these skills into their practice and preparation in areas outside of the applied lesson.

Goal setting, self-reflection, and evaluation allow for the student and teacher to have an authentic conversation about where the student is currently and where they would like to be at the end of a semester, a year, or the conclusion of their undergraduate degree. Having an understanding of why they are discussing a topic or technique and how it will apply in performance and education can begin to paint a more complete picture for the student who may be beginning their college career with little direction.

The following self-evaluation form [see figure 6.1] is to be used in conjunction with the teacher evaluation at the beginning of each academic year. It can help the student

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<sup>23</sup> Doyle, James. "Goal Setting in the Applied Percussion Lesson." *Percussive Notes* 55, no. 2 (May 2017): 68-69.

identify areas of focus and discover long and short-term goals. This evaluation is adapted from the self-evaluation form from the University of Central Florida Percussion

Handbook by Jeffrey Moore.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Moore, Jeffrey. "Percussion Handbook." UCF Music Department. Summer 2011. Accessed January 10, 2018. <http://music.cah.ucf.edu/percussion.php>.

## Figure 6.1. Student Self-Evaluation

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SEMESTER: \_\_\_\_\_

1. My current abilities in the following areas of percussion performance are ranked from strongest (1) to weakest:

- a. \_\_\_\_ Concert snare drum
- b. \_\_\_\_ Rudimental snare drum
- c. \_\_\_\_ Two-mallet keyboard
- d. \_\_\_\_ Four-mallet keyboard
- e. \_\_\_\_ Timpani
- f. \_\_\_\_ Drum set
- g. \_\_\_\_ Multiple percussion
- h. \_\_\_\_ Afro-Cuban/Latin percussion
- i. \_\_\_\_ Orchestral Excerpts

2. In the previous semester, I feel that I have accomplished the following goals:

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3. My semester objectives include:

- \_\_\_\_ Improving performance in my weakest area of percussion
- \_\_\_\_ Learning historical aspects of percussion performance and instruments
- \_\_\_\_ Preparation for jury or barrier examination
- \_\_\_\_ Preparation for Junior/Senior recital
- \_\_\_\_ Preparation for graduate school auditions
- \_\_\_\_ Summer music festival auditions
- \_\_\_\_ Composing/arranging solo and chamber percussion works
- \_\_\_\_ Other:

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**Figure 6.1. Student Self-Evaluation continued**

Musicianship:

- ☐ Improving my sense of time and pulse control
- ☐ Further developing my touch and tone production on percussion instruments
- ☐ Improving keyboard sight reading ability in different keys and clefs
- ☐ Learning advanced rhythmic reading skills
- ☐ Improvement in music analytical skills
- ☐ Improvement in timpani tuning and interval relationship
- ☐ Improvement in music memorization
- ☐ Other:

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4. My short-term goals include:

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5. My long-term goals include:

- ☐ Teaching music:
- ☐ Teaching music in a public school
- ☐ Teaching music in a private school
- ☐ Teaching music in a private studio
- ☐ Teaching marching percussion
- ☐ Teaching music in Higher Education
- ☐ Other:

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**Figure 6.1. Student Self-Evaluation continued**

<input type="checkbox"/> Professional Performance goals:
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial music venues
<input type="checkbox"/> Freelance percussionist
<input type="checkbox"/> Touring musician with shows
<input type="checkbox"/> Recording artist (radio, film/TV)
<input type="checkbox"/> Contemporary solo and/or chamber artist
<input type="checkbox"/> Orchestral (symphony, opera, ballet orchestras)
<input type="checkbox"/> Military band
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
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<input type="checkbox"/> Other professional goals:
<input type="checkbox"/> Arts Administration and management
<input type="checkbox"/> Music library
<input type="checkbox"/> Music editing and engraving
<input type="checkbox"/> Music retail
<input type="checkbox"/> Music industry
<input type="checkbox"/> Music business
<input type="checkbox"/> Composing/arranging
<input type="checkbox"/> Recording/sound engineer
<input type="checkbox"/> Music Therapy
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:
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Structure and balance within the applied lesson is an element that will be constantly changing and in need of adjustment throughout the student's undergraduate degree. In



order to address multiple areas and present a breadth of knowledge to the student, a structure that identifies multiple areas of study within a semester should be established during the initial meeting and evaluative process for each student. By using these tools of self-evaluation, short and long-term goals, and applied lesson objectives we are providing the student with the opportunity to succeed. With a vast amount of literature and genres to cover within four years, having a clear plan that is outlined with the student will provide a greater opportunity for the student to be successful.

Based on this author's experience, when deciding where to start with each student I look at the areas where the student excels and the areas that need greater attention and development. This is the starting point for each student with the intention of placing attention on deficient areas and coupling these with areas in which the student has greater interest and ability. With this approach, the student is continuously engaged with new material that can focus on fundamentals while growing musical and performance elements through more advanced study.

In figure 6.2, the outline shows the overall flow of the applied lesson for each semester. The applied lessons are broken down into two areas of focus for the first half of the semester. Beginning at week seven, a new area of focus can be introduced, depending on student progress throughout the semester. This outline provides a method to document materials and progress the student makes throughout the semester. It will be updated weekly to track progress and keep a record of material that has been covered. The sample outline in Figure 6.2 is an example of a first-semester freshman percussion student who is competent in snare drum and drum set, but deficient in keyboard percussion.

**Figure 6.2. Applied semester lesson outline**

<b>WEEK</b>	<b>CONTENT AREA: Keyboard/accessory instruments</b>	<b>CONTENT AREA: Snare Drum</b>
Week 1	Cymbal and tambourine fundamentals: discussion and demonstration of technique on both instruments. * Loud and soft crashes * Single stroke exercises	Stone, <i>Stick Control</i> Roll sheets. Open/closed rolls Peters, <i>Intermediate Snare Drum Studies</i> Wilcoxon, <i>The All-American Drummer</i>
Week 2	Cymbal and tambourine: Cymbals/tambourine: Peters, <i>Elementary Method for Snare Drum</i> Epstein, <i>Cymbalisms</i>	Stone, <i>Stick Control</i> Roll sheets. Open/closed rolls Peters, <i>Intermediate Snare Drum Studies</i> Wilcoxon, <i>The All-American Drummer</i>
Week 3	Cymbals, tambourine, and triangle: Aleo, <i>Complementary Percussion</i> Peters, <i>Elementary Method for Snare Drum</i>	Stone, <i>Stick Control</i> Roll sheets. Open/closed rolls Peters, <i>Intermediate Snare Drum Studies</i> Wilcoxon, <i>The All-American Drummer</i>
Week 4	Major/minor scales Green, <i>Instructional course for the xylophone</i> Kite, <i>Reading Mallet Percussion Music</i>	Stone, <i>Stick Control</i> Roll sheets. Open/closed rolls Peters, <i>Intermediate Snare Drum Studies</i> Wilcoxon, <i>The All-American Drummer</i>
Week 5	Major/minor Arpeggios Anderson, <i>Well-Tempered Mallet Studies</i> Green, <i>Instructional course for the xylophone</i> Kite, <i>Reading Mallet Percussion Music</i>	Reed, <i>Syncopation</i> Peters, <i>Intermediate Snare Drum Studies</i> Wilcoxon, <i>The All-American Drummer</i>
Week 6 Mid-term evaluation	Green, <i>Instructional course for the xylophone</i> Anderson, <i>Well-Tempered Mallet Studies</i> Kite, <i>Reading Mallet Percussion Music</i>	Reed, <i>Syncopation</i> Peters, <i>Intermediate Snare Drum Studies</i> Wilcoxon, <i>The All-American Drummer</i>
Week 7 content area shift	Bona, <i>Rhythmical Articulation (sight- reading)</i> Teacher, Four-mallet marimba grip and technique Moyer, <i>Four-Mallet Method for Marimba</i>	Reed, <i>Syncopation</i> Cirone, <i>Portraits in Rhythm</i> Igoe, <i>Groove Essentials, vol. 1</i>

**Figure 6.2. Applied semester lesson outline continued**

WEEK	CONTENT AREA: Keyboard	CONTENT AREA: Drum set
Week 8	Moyer, <i>Four-Mallet Method for Marimba</i> Anderson, <i>Well-Tempered Mallet Studies</i> (Assign two-mallet etude) Bona, <i>Rhythmical Articulation</i> (sight-reading)	Reed, <i>Syncopation</i> Igoe, <i>Groove Essentials</i> , vol. 1 Morgan, <i>Jazz Drummer's Reading workbook</i>
Week 9	Moyer, <i>Four-Mallet Method for Marimba</i> Bona, <i>Rhythmical Articulation</i> (sight-reading) Davila, <i>Impressions in Wood</i> (exercises) assign piece	Reed, <i>Syncopation</i> Igoe, <i>Groove Essentials</i> , vol. 1 Morgan, <i>Jazz Drummer's Reading workbook</i> Cirone, <i>Portraits in Rhythm</i>
Week 10	Bona, <i>Rhythmical Articulation</i> (sight-reading) Moyer, <i>Four-Mallet Method for Marimba</i> Davila, <i>Impressions in Wood</i> (exercises)	Reed, <i>Syncopation</i> Igoe, <i>Groove Essentials</i> , vol. 1 Morgan, <i>Jazz Drummer's Reading workbook</i>
Week 11	Davila, <i>Impressions in Wood</i> (piece) Moyer, <i>Four-Mallet Method for Marimba</i> Bona, <i>Rhythmical Articulation</i> (sight-reading)	Igoe, <i>Groove Essentials</i> , vol. 1 Houghton, <i>Essential Styles</i> , vol. 1 Morgan, <i>Jazz Drummer's Reading workbook</i> Cirone, <i>Portraits in Rhythm</i>
Week 12	Bona, <i>Rhythmical Articulation</i> (sight-reading) Anderson, <i>Well-Tempered Mallet Studies</i> (two-mallet etude)	Igoe, <i>Groove Essentials</i> , vol. 1 Morgan, <i>Jazz Drummer's Reading workbook</i> Houghton, <i>Essential Styles</i> , vol. 1
Week 13	Bona, <i>Rhythmical Articulation</i> (sight-reading) Davila, <i>Impressions in Wood</i> Anderson, <i>Well-Tempered Mallet Studies</i> (two-mallet etude)	Morgan, <i>Jazz Drummer's Reading workbook</i> Houghton, <i>Essential Styles</i> , vol. 1 Cirone, <i>Portraits in Rhythm</i>
Week 14	Perform: Davila, <i>Impressions in Wood</i> Anderson, <i>Well-Tempered Mallet Studies</i> (two-mallet etude)	Perform: Houghton, <i>Essential Styles</i> , vol. 1 Morgan, <i>Jazz Drummer's Reading workbook</i> Cirone, <i>Portraits in Rhythm</i>

With the intent of the applied lessons to be very specific on technical and musical development, limiting the number of areas that will be studied within a given semester will give full attention to that specific content in order to achieve greater depth within the

subject. Attempting to cover many areas on a weekly basis will not provide the opportunity to become fully engaged with the subject at hand. If a student has to prepare for a weekly lesson where they are assigned snare drum, timpani, marimba, and drum set, there is not an opportunity for the student or teacher to provide enough detail or in-depth analysis given the time constraints. Although the weekly lesson is focused on two content areas, other content can be assigned. The reason for this is so the student can work on material independently to continue making progress once the content focus has changed. An example of this can be seen in Figure 6.2 when the content focus changes from snare drum to drum set. Beginning at week seven, drum set is introduced as the new content area but snare drum etudes are still assigned to continue building upon work that was done earlier in the semester.

## **Chapter 7: Four-Year Undergraduate Curriculum**

The outline contained within this four-year curriculum is based on the author's personal experiences in teaching at an institution of higher education with an explicit focus on undergraduate education. It is organized by individual instrument areas rather than by the grade level of the student. The rationale is due to the differing ability levels that students will have on each particular instrument. There is an overall spectrum, and many students will fall into different levels depending on the specific instrument. Rather than having all freshman students begin at level one and move sequentially through the material, the teacher can evaluate where the student should start on each instrument and structure the curriculum with that in mind.

Within each instrument category, the specific content has been separated for the appropriate ability level for the student, and in many situations, content will overlap between levels based on the specific technical or musical skills. Etudes and solos are also listed within each category as representative material based upon ability level. Specific pieces that are listed are only a representation of material that can be used within the applied lesson. An exhaustive list of solos, etudes, and technical studies would not be practical for building a curriculum. Additionally, the course content listed is also material that the author is highly familiar with and has used in previous applied lessons. While standard technical books are used in different areas throughout the development of this curriculum, material can and should be added as new books are written.

The volume of percussion literature available for the student has expanded greatly throughout the twentieth century, and it is important to identify material that can serve as a representation of available teaching and performance materials. With the advances in

technology and access to information, students today have greater access to material via websites, print-on-demand material, streaming video services, and social media platforms. This advancement in availability is a tremendous benefit in percussion pedagogy, and having the opportunity to discover and analyze new material is extremely beneficial for the student and teacher. This may provide an opportunity to discover new approaches that may serve the teaching process for the individual student and their learning style.

A well-defined outline of content in percussion education is rightfully needed; however, the discovery of new material is crucial to the art of teaching music. The teacher should consider how to apply new material and if it should be applied within their current track of instruction. Course content may be supplemented throughout the process based on the progression of the student and as interests shift throughout their undergraduate education.

Within this curriculum, this author has identified content areas that are standard in university percussion programs throughout the United States and have been part of the educational foundation of a percussion education since it entered the university system in the early twentieth century. The study of snare drum, timpani, keyboard, drum set, multiple percussion, and world percussion will have a dynamic part in the overall education of the student and will provide each student with a solid foundation and skill set that is appropriate for professional standards that have been defined by the percussion community.

Some areas will have greater focus than other areas due to literature, content, and role the area will play in the overall education of the student. An example of this can be

seen with multiple percussion within the undergraduate curriculum. With multiple-percussion there is a limited number of resources available for the student in regard to etudes or technical studies, but technical development through study in snare drum, drum set, and keyboard can be directly applied to learning multiple-percussion literature. Using other content areas to provide context for the study of multiple-percussion solo literature will draw musical connections through several percussion genres within academia.

Providing the student with the opportunity to experience multiple areas within percussion is crucial for the student to make informed decisions on areas that they may wish to specialize in beyond their undergraduate degree. If the student does not pursue a percussion education beyond their undergraduate degree, they will have received an education that presents diversity in percussion that provides them with context and mastery to move forward in the professional world.

The following chapters will address the fundamental areas that should be included in the undergraduate percussion curriculum: snare drum, keyboard, timpani, drum set, Afro Cuban, multiple percussion, and accessory instruments.

## Chapter 8: Snare Drum Studies

The study of snare drum within the undergraduate curriculum is one of the essential areas that all students must experience. Because of the transferable nature of the instrument's technical elements, the study of snare drum is crucial to development in all areas of percussion. This is a sentiment that is shared among most professional performers and teachers. According to Bob Breithaupt, "snare drum is the fundamental percussion instrument from which all the other percussion instruments branch."<sup>25</sup> Snare drum study is where many percussionists began when starting in middle school or high school, and it continues to be a central element in our studies because of how technical and musical development can transfer to many other instruments.

Rudimental and orchestral styles will be discussed in great detail throughout the students' study, helping them gain greater understanding of orchestral repertoire, historical significance in the development of drumming from a military tradition, and how the skills are transferable to other instruments within the percussion family. Continued development and refinement on the snare drum also develops sensitivity, touch, and the ability to create musical gestures on an instrument with limited tonality. This reinforces that at the most fundamental level in percussion performance, many of the actions and motions are similar across all percussion instruments.

For all instruments within the percussion family, the study of the snare drum reinforces the concept and development of four basic stroke types that will transfer to

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<sup>25</sup> Morgan, Tom. "Drumset Roundtable with Breithaupt, Houghton, Remonko, and Soph: A Summary." *Percussive Notes* 35, no. 4 (August 1997): 72-73.



every instrument. It is critical that students understand these from the beginning. The four, basic stroke types as I define them are:

1. Rebound stroke: A full stroke where the following note(s) are of equal volume.
2. Down stroke: A stroke type that is used when the following note is softer
3. Tap strokes: Soft strokes that occur after an accent. In a drum set application that may be defined as “ghost notes”
4. Upstroke: Starting with a soft note that is immediately followed by a loud note.

With the idea of stroke types as a starting point, we can reinforce proper technique with the student and “fill in the gaps” in their technical development to address areas that may have been overlooked in their previous training. It is important to reinforce fundamental concepts of dexterity and technique with the snare drum to better serve other instruments and to focus on musical and technical development in tandem. Working with material that can transfer to other instruments, directly or indirectly, will aid in faster progress by the student.

With this reinforcement, one can begin to refine technique used for orchestral and rudimental styles of drumming that can relate to all areas of percussion discussed within the undergraduate curriculum. According to Dr. John Wooton, “the technique I use to play rudiments on a snare drum or practice pad can be directly applied to drum set, marimba, timpani, congas, and nearly any percussion instrument.”<sup>26</sup> Relating rudimental and orchestral study to other percussion instruments is the first step in the realization that we, as percussionists, have a shared body of knowledge to reinforce touch, musicianship, and technique that is transferrable to practically every instrument we will encounter.

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<sup>26</sup> Wooton, John. "Rudiments and Rudimental Technique Applied to Drumset." *Percussive Notes* 32, no. 2 (April 2005): 40-43.

Pedagogically defining and reinforcing the fundamental stroke types will aid in the development of the percussion student as they gain technical proficiency on the snare drum. Before a discussion can begin on the *PAS 40 International Drum Rudiments*, Wilcoxon *All-American Drummer*, or Jacques Delecluse *Douze Etudes pour Cassie-Claire*, the student must understand the fundamental stroke types that are used and train their hands on how to apply the strokes in snare drum repertoire and performance situations.

The guide that is presented here serves as a framework for students to see how they will progress through their snare drum studies and what technical and musical styles and elements will be explored. The content within the framework is only a guide. Material can be altered based on student need and teacher recommendation. In this author's opinion both orchestral and rudimental styles of drumming can be developed to provide a greater depth of knowledge in these separate worlds that many percussionists encounter. The material is separated into two sections, technical studies and etudes and solo repertoire. The intent behind separating the two sets of material is to specifically identify books that can be used only in technical development and music written that reinforces technical training. In some cases, there will be an overlap between the two areas depending on the content within the book and how it is applied to the lesson.

An example of this case is *The All-American Drummer*, written by Charles Wilcoxon. This book is a staple in percussion pedagogy because of the progressive nature of the solos in the book and the focus each solo provides to individual rudiments or combinations of rudiments. For my personal teaching on snare drum, this book is used in conjunction with the *PAS 40 International Drum Rudiments* to isolate the individual

rudiment and to show practical application through written solos. In addition to the studies on the snare drum, it is important to look at how the technical development on the drum can be shared among other instruments making the overall development of the student grow at a faster rate than if all these elements were looked at in isolation.

With limited time and dedicated study to each specific area within percussion, there is a need for efficient development within the snare drum content area. Providing course content that will aid in the transmission of ideas with great depth and efficiency is a balance that will be continuously refined based on the individual. There is not a singular path of progressive material that will fully develop all students, therefore an individualized approach to the content will begin to shape a balanced process for instruction.

Figure 8.1 outlines representative material used in snare drum study at the undergraduate level. The three categories in figure 8.1 identify material for technique, sight-reading and etudes, and orchestral excerpts.

**Figure 8.1. Snare drum technique and etudes**

<b>Technique</b>	<b>Etudes/Sight-Reading</b>	<b>Orchestral Excerpts</b>
Bailey, <i>Wrist Twisters</i>	Aleo, <i>Advanced Etudes for Snare Drum</i>	Carroll, <i>Orchestral Repertoire for the Snare Drum</i>
Cirone, <i>Master Technique Builders</i>	Bobo, <i>Odd Meter Studies for Snare Drum</i>	Bartok, <i>Concerto for Orchestra</i>
Goldenberg, <i>Modern School for the Snare Drum</i>	Cirone, <i>Portraits in Rhythm</i>	Prokofiev, <i>Lt. Kiji</i>
Morello, <i>Master Studies</i>	Delécluse, <i>Douze Études pour Caisse-Clarie</i>	Ravel, <i>Bolero</i>
Percussive Arts Society, <i>40 International Drum Rudiments</i>	Delécluse, <i>Studio' M Vol. 1-2</i>	Ravel, <i>Capriccio Espagnol</i>
Peters, <i>Developing Dexterity</i>	Firth, <i>The Solo Snare Drummer</i>	Rimsky Korsakov, <i>Scheherazade</i>
Peters, <i>Elementary Snare Drum Studies</i>	Goldenberg, <i>Modern School for the Snare Drum</i>	Schuman, <i>Symphony No. 3</i>
Peters, <i>Intermediate Snare Drum Studies</i>	Peters, <i>Intermediate Snare Drum Studies</i>	
Podemski, <i>Podemski's Standard Snare Drum Method</i>	Peters, <i>Advanced Snare Drum Studies</i>	
Reed, <i>Syncopation</i>	Peters, <i>Odd Meter Rudimental Etudes</i>	
Sholle, <i>The Roll</i>	Peters, <i>Hard Times</i>	
Stone, <i>Stick Control</i>	Pratt, <i>14 Modern Contest Solos</i>	
Stone, <i>Accents and Rebounds</i>	Savage, <i>Rudimental Workshop</i>	
Tilburg, <i>The Regimen</i>	Tompkins, <i>Nine French-American Rudimental Solos</i>	
Wilcoxon, <i>Wrist and Finger Control</i>	Wilcoxon, <i>The All-American Drummer</i>	

Figure 8.2 outlines solo repertoire for the snare drum. The material is separated into three categories based on difficulty level.

**Figure 8.2. Snare Drum repertoire**

<b>Beginning-Intermediate</b>	<b>Intermediate-Advanced</b>	<b>Extremely Advanced</b>
Baker, <i>Lonely City Suite</i>	Akiho, <i>Stop Speaking</i>	Bobo, <i>Tantrum</i>
Beck, <i>Colonial Capers</i>	Burritt, <i>Cooper</i>	Cage, <i>Composed Improvisation for Snare Drum</i>
Beck, <i>Three Miniatures for Snare Drum</i>	Campbell, <i>Symphonic Dances for Snare Drum</i>	Cahn, <i>Nara</i>
Benson, <i>Three Dances for Solo Snare Drum</i>	Colgrass, <i>Six Unaccompanied Solos for Snare Drum</i>	Cangelosi, <i>Meditation No. 1</i>
Kraft, <i>2-4-1</i>	Delécluse, <i>Test-Claire</i>	Cangelosi, <i>Tap Oratory</i>
Ling, <i>Third Rail</i>	Kaiser, <i>Der Provokateur</i>	Markovich, <i>Stamina</i>
Perez, <i>Pulsar</i>	Kopetzki, <i>Concert Suite for Snare Drum</i>	Markovich, <i>Tornado</i>
Raymond, <i>Double Play for Solo Snare Drum</i>	Nexus, <i>Portfolio for Snare Drum</i>	Martynciow, <i>Tchik</i>
Schinstine, <i>Adventures in Solo Drumming</i>	Tompkins, <i>March</i>	Másson, <i>Prim</i>
Traditional, <i>The Downfall of Paris</i>	Trevino, <i>Spur</i>	Másson, <i>Kim</i>
Wahlund, <i>The Benson Dances</i>	Wahlund, <i>Whimsical Nature of Small Particle Physics</i>	Reeves, <i>War Drum Peace Drum</i>
Wilcoxon, <i>The New Downfall</i>	Živković, <i>Pezzo da Concerto No. 1</i>	Tompkins, <i>Walkin' Down Coolidge</i>

In addition to rudimental development, the study of orchestral drumming is also an essential part of growth. Having a clearer understanding of varying interpretations, context, and application of technique will transfer into all areas of percussion performance. While there is a clear delineation between orchestral and rudimental styles of playing, they are both relevant in percussion pedagogy. Both can aid in the musical development on the drum, since we do see the styles blend in contemporary music, band, and orchestral literature. The blending of styles and techniques is blurring the lines within

snare drum study, further indicating the shared nature and experience within all percussion literature.

In an orchestral style, the focus is shifted from a pure technical development to one that will also incorporate music history, orchestral literature, and musical interpretation. Much of the study in an orchestral style will come from exercises, etudes, and orchestral repertoire. There are many reasons to use orchestral excerpts in an undergraduate education. One such reason is that excerpts are often used in professional orchestral and military band auditions, graduate school auditions, and for placement in summer music festivals. While these are some of the practical uses of excerpts, there are additional benefits that can relate to the overall music education experience. Justin Alexander states, “researching orchestral literature offers musical and educational experiences not easily found in other aspects of percussion training, and it serves to make a stronger overall musician...no matter where performance affinities may lie.”<sup>27</sup> This sentiment is directly applicable to snare drum study and is directly related to the study of all instruments within the Western classical tradition. When considering instruments such as the tambourine, triangle, and cymbals, the use of excerpts plays a significant role in learning to play them.

Providing a balance within the curriculum of solo repertoire, technical studies, and excerpts provides a broad platform to present a more complete picture of snare drum and its central role in an undergraduate curriculum. Starting at this point will lead to more significant development on other percussion instruments as the student continues to progress. Additionally, providing this foundation helps the student recall information

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<sup>27</sup> Alexander, Justin. "The Value of Orchestral Excerpts." *Percussive Notes* 52, no. 1 (January 2014): 42-43.

gained within snare drum studies and the ability to incorporate them into areas such as drum set and keyboard.

The intersection between snare drum and drum set is the most obvious area where we see many correlations in hand and stylistic development. In adapting snare drum studies to the drum set, we can begin to think creatively about how these elements can be applied and what needs to be altered to fit within drum set study. In creating a shared application for snare drum and drum set studies, a prime example can be the use of *Progressive Steps to Syncopation for the Modern Drummer* by Ted Reed<sup>28</sup>. This is a book used in many teaching studios for development on drum set. The practical application of the material is almost endless for snare drum development from accent and roll exercises to drum set independence. The application of *Syncopation* to a well-rounded curriculum will serve students throughout their undergraduate career. In addition to the exercises that are presented in Figure 8.3, the use of these exercises within *Syncopation* can be applied and adapted to the study of accessory instruments such as crash cymbals, tambourine, and triangle. These examples are the ways in which this author applies *Syncopation* to the snare drum. In chapter eleven, this author includes independence exercises on the drum set with the melodies found within *Syncopation*.

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<sup>28</sup> Reed, Ted. *Progressive steps to syncopation for the modern drummer*. Van Nuys, CA: Alfred, 1996.

**Figure 8.3. Application of *Syncopation* to Snare drum**

*Syncopation Snare Drum Exercises*  
Examples of exercises based on *Syncopation* by Ted Reed

Original Syncopation melody. Exercise one, line one page 38.

1. Melody with paradiddles

2. Triplet exercise alternating

3. Triplet exercise, right hand lead

4. Triplet exercise with diddles

5. Triplet exercise with rolls

6. Triplet exercise with flams

7. Triple stroke roll exercise



With the study of snare drum being the starting point for many students, it continues to be the foundation of our technical and musical development as percussionists. The importance of the study on snare drum translates to many instruments, both technically and musically, including timpani, drum set, and keyboard instruments. Developing a solid foundation on snare drum in an orchestral and rudimental style starts with basic stroke types that may need to be reinforced for the student to truly understand the function and physical motions of striking the drum to produce the desired sound.

A curriculum for an undergraduate program needs to view musical and technical development as central elements, so that by the students' final year they should have a grasp on snare drum technique, sound production, and dexterity on the instrument. This will vary for every student based on their previous experience. The first step in this process is to evaluate the level of the student's snare drum ability in order to select appropriate material for them to use and progress. This is a very difficult evaluation for both the teacher and student.

An initial evaluation of the student's development should address the following areas; hand position (grip) and technique, stroke and touch on the drum, sound production, open and closed rolls, orchestral and rudimental playing styles, and sight reading. The author-designed rubric in figure 8.4 is a tool to assess each student. Using this rubric, the teacher will be able to identify specific ability levels and develop a plan for the student. It will also aid in selecting appropriate material to assign for the applied lesson.

**Figure 8.4. Snare drum evaluation**

Evaluation	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV	Level V	Level VI
Hand position/ Technique						
Touch and Dexterity						
Sound production						
Multiple bounce/open rolls						
Orchestral style						
Rudimental style						
Sight reading						

**Level I:** Serious gaps in technical development with limited knowledge in tone production and limited ability/knowledge in orchestral or rudimental styles.

**Level II:** Basic understanding and demonstration of proper technique with basic knowledge of proper sound production. Basic understanding of orchestral and rudimental styles with limited reading ability.

**Level III:** Solid understanding of technique, sound production, and touch with the ability to perform and demonstrate orchestral and rudimental styles with proper technique and touch with a reasonable amount of accuracy. Able to sight read basic short etudes with few errors.

**Level IV:** Able to demonstrate proper technique with little to no errors with a high degree of accuracy. Able to perform intermediate to advanced etudes with little error and a solid sense of timing and control. Advanced knowledge of orchestral and rudimental styles with the ability to sight read without errors.

**Level V:** Firm grasp of advanced techniques on the drum with a very high quality of touch and sound production on the drum. Ability to perform advanced orchestral and rudimental etudes with a high degree of musical and technical accuracy. Solid understanding of orchestral excerpts and able to sight read advanced etudes with little to no errors.

**Level VI:** An extremely high level of ability on snare drum with no gaps in technical development. Performance ability in highly advanced orchestral and rudimental solos appropriate for a senior or graduate recital. Ability to sight read advanced etudes with no errors and exceptional pulse control.

Generally speaking, students will fall into many different areas within the evaluation process and will have different abilities within each category. For example, students who can perform in a rudimental style with a high degree of accuracy might have little ability in sight reading or performing in an orchestral style. Evaluating the ability of the student when they enter the studio is crucial in order to place the student on the right path of continued development. Using evaluative measures for all instruments will best match the student with material and will help the teacher engage with a particular student. The intent here is to limit frustrations for the student. Working with them well above their level creates the potential of developing further gaps in performance ability. Additionally, starting a student well below their ability level doesn't take into account the progress a student has made prior to their time as an undergraduate student. Striking a balance and having the ability to identify, diagnose, and create a course of action to see the student make great progress in a limited amount of time will play a significant role in their progression.

The content contained within the snare drum section can be changed and adjusted based on the student's interests and connection with the music and the goals and objectives set by the instructor and student. Regardless of specific titles, the content serves the purpose of developing technical and musical skills across genres and styles, aiding in the transfer to other percussion areas. The representative titles in figures 8.1 and 8.2 are a glimpse into the material available for students and teachers. For this author, this material has proven to be successful in applied teaching at the undergraduate level. As

performers and teachers create new material, the current listing will likely expand and perhaps some of the current materials will be replaced.

Applying snare drum study to other percussion instruments can lead to faster and greater development in keyboard, timpani, and drum set studies as part of a total curriculum at the undergraduate level. Historically, beginning percussion studies in private and school settings start with the snare drum because of the transferrable skills. The application of snare drum technique will aid in the student's overall development when the basic principles refined on the snare drum are directly applied to most, if not all, percussion instruments.

## Chapter 9: Keyboard Studies

Along with studies on the snare drum, keyboard studies have been part of the curriculum since percussion gained a foothold in the university setting and are an essential element of an undergraduate percussion education. Sometimes students transitioning from high school to college have dedicated great attention to keyboard performance, often to the detriment of other instruments. In high school programs, specialization is something that has become more common as programs develop highly competitive marching and winter drum line programs. In his article, *Role of Keyboard Percussion in Undergraduate Applied Lessons*, Kevin Clyde states, “Many incoming freshmen have limited experience playing these instruments and have only four years in which to become proficient.”<sup>29</sup> This is in conjunction with what teachers will see with incoming freshman - a focus on one area of percussion (drum set, snare, keyboard) with the sacrifice of other areas. There has been an increased focus on solo marimba performance in the United States through summer marimba festivals and competitions. At least one institution is currently offering degree programs specific to marimba, separate from percussion. The Boston Conservatory currently offers degree programs in percussion at the undergraduate and graduate level, as well as graduate programs specific to marimba. These professional degree programs, as well as performance certificate programs, are specifically designed for those seeking to pursue focused and concentrated training on a specific percussion instrument. A focus on specific areas within percussion is more common at the graduate level with programs focused on marimba performance,

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<sup>29</sup> Clyde, Kevin. "The Role of Keyboard Percussion in the Undergraduate Applied Lessons." *Percussive Notes* 41, no. 6 (December 2003): 52-54.

orchestral studies, timpani, and world percussion. All of these programs have a place within higher education at the graduate level and should be available to those with an interest and desire to focus within a specific area however, a well-rounded curriculum is recommended by this author at the undergraduate level.

Keyboard studies within this curriculum will incorporate two and four mallet keyboard performance on all instruments (marimba, xylophone, vibraphone, orchestra bells). Using a varied selection of solo repertoire, etudes, and orchestral excerpts, keyboard studies at the undergraduate level will provide a balance of technical and musical development on all keyboard instruments offering a sense of practical application across varied performance situations. The rationale for placing an emphasis on multiple keyboard instruments within the course content is due to the frequency that they are being used in classical, contemporary, and band literature in addition to the establishment of marimba and vibraphone as solo instruments throughout the twentieth century.

The goal with the undergraduate level is to provide the student with a firm understanding, appreciation, and application of keyboard studies and techniques across a spectrum of genres and styles. The course content outlined within this undergraduate curriculum attempts to identify areas where the development of keyboard technical proficiencies can go beyond solo repertoire and explore more situations where ensemble and reading skills are reinforced. Excellent reading skills on all keyboard instruments will be highly beneficial for the continued success as a percussionist and is an area that all musicians continue to work on well into their professional career.

There is no single method to sight-reading or one way to teach sight-reading, but because this is an area that generally does not receive enough attention when students are

first learning the instrument, it is often weaker than technical or musical skills. Based on Kevin Clyde's survey, "sight-reading skills seem to be an area that percussionists lack, especially on keyboard instruments. In most cases, sheer lack of experience on keyboard instruments is the cause of the problem."<sup>30</sup> Within this curriculum, sight-reading is an active component on all instruments. With the development of reading at the keyboard, students are working on both melodic and rhythmic reading skills that will improve with increased experience and exposure over time. One method for sight-reading that will be used in the applied lesson is through duets. Having the teacher and student engaged together to aid in reading will provide the student with the confidence to build these essential skills. Additionally, diatonic, short musical examples that are progressive in nature found in *Rhythmical Articulation* by Pasquale Bona, provide this progressive approach to sight-reading that will become more advanced as the student progresses.

The technical studies and etude materials outlined within this section aim to develop the student in two-mallet and four-mallet performance with an emphasis on complete development technically and musically. It is essential to develop all areas simultaneously to ensure that the student will not have gaps in their training and musical identity.

Solo repertoire is intended to develop the student technically and musically through the study of keyboard literature that is standard within the percussion community as well as new repertoire that has been composed from the end of the twentieth century to present. Striking a balance between standard repertoire and new literature is essential since the repertoire being produced today is often written by performer/composers, many

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<sup>30</sup> Clyde, Kevin. "General Issues Concerning Percussion Education at the Undergraduate Level." *Percussive Notes* 41, no. 3 (June 2003): 28-31.

of whom are pushing the boundaries of technical and musical abilities of the instrument. Study and analysis of solo repertoire will develop students' skills in addition to their technical ability. If a student can fully understand the composition from an analytical perspective it can serve them further if they have an interest and desire to compose and improvise at the keyboard. Developing musical maturity within the student to allow them to make informed choices on musical interpretation is central to the development of a percussionist at a professional level. With solo marimba repertoire at the core of this musical development the student will grow musically as a solo musician and build her/his ability to make musical decisions effectively and within proper context.

The goal within this curriculum is to identify areas that need development and build on both the musical and technical aspects that can transfer across the spectrum of percussion instruments and genres. Based on the outcome of the initial evaluation in keyboard studies, the student will begin with two mallet studies. If there has been training and development of four mallet repertoire, both will be studied simultaneously. The intent with a student that demonstrates a high level of competence on the keyboard will be to continue refining musical decisions and justifications, and through the study of repertoire, continue to develop technical facility on the instrument.

For a student with limited ability at the keyboard, it will be the task of the teacher and student to devise a long-term plan that will see the student quickly hone their skills and transfer knowledge from other percussion areas to "catch up" in their keyboard studies. With the central theme of creating a well-rounded musician, the focus on deficient areas is to build musical and technical elements within the instrument, skills and



confidence, and to bring these elements to the same level of competence that is appropriate for a standard of performance as a young professional.

For keyboard studies within the undergraduate curriculum, we can articulate musical and technical elements that will transfer to all instruments. Touch, phrasing, analysis, and the development of musicianship are all reinforced by keyboard percussion studies. Reinforcing these skills at the keyboard will further develop the musical skills on non-pitched instruments such as snare drum, drum set, and multiple percussion. Applying a melodic approach to instruments that are not inherently melodic will develop students' musicianship on all instruments for solo and ensemble performance.

Conversely, technical developments on the snare drum will aid in the development at the keyboard. With the fundamental principles of snare drum studies transferring to most instruments used in the Western classical tradition, the concepts of stroke and hand motion used on the drum are directly applied to the keyboard. The callisthenic motions that are fundamental in keyboard performance are used with timpani and drum set as well. Understanding and utilizing lateral motion that is found in all these instruments will aid in faster development throughout all instruments.

One of the most practical applications within keyboard studies is the musical interpretation development of the student. With study on melodic instrument, matters of phrasing, balance, volume, and musicality can be applied with the study of solo repertoire and musical etudes. This is the most apparent way for a student to begin thinking melodically and can be applied across the spectrum of non-pitched percussion instruments. The development of the student to think musically and in a more linear

manner will aid in their overall growth as a musician and transcend beyond the study of percussion into practical applications as a performer, collaborating musician, and teacher.

Figure 9.1 contains representative method books and etudes used in the undergraduate curriculum. There are three categories, technique, etudes/sight-reading, and collections of orchestral excerpts.

**Figure 9.1. Method books and technical studies**

<b>Technique</b>	<b>Etudes/Sight-Reading</b>	<b>Orchestral Excerpts</b>
Bailey, <i>Mental and Manual Calisthenics for the Mallet Player</i>	Anderson, <i>Well-Tempered Mallet Studies</i>	Mozart, <i>The Magic Flute</i>
Bobo, <i>Permutations for the Advanced Marimbist</i>	Bach, <i>Inventions (duets)</i>	Dukas, <i>Sorcerer's Apprentice</i>
Burton, <i>Four Mallet Studies</i>	Bergamo, <i>Style Studies</i>	Strauss, <i>Don Juan</i>
Friedman, <i>Vibraphone Technique: Dampening and Pedaling</i>	Bona, <i>Rhythmical Articulation</i>	Respighi, <i>Pines of Rome</i>
Goldenberg, <i>Modern School for Xylophone, Marimba, and Vibraphone</i>	Cirone, <i>Portraits in Melody</i>	Gershwin, <i>Porgy and Bess</i>
Green, <i>Instructional Course for the Xylophone</i>	Delecluse, <i>20 Studies for Xylophone</i>	Copland, <i>Appalachian Spring</i>
Kite, <i>Reading Mallet Percussion Music</i>	Ford, <i>Marimba Technique through Music</i>	Kabalevsky, <i>Colas Breugnon</i>
Metzger, <i>The Art and Language of Jazz Vibes</i>	Kite, <i>Reading Mallet Percussion Music</i>	Shostakovich, <i>Polka, from the Golden Age Ballet</i>
Moyer, <i>Four-Mallet Method for Marimba</i>	Moyer, <i>Four-Mallet Progressive Literature</i>	Bernstein, "Cool," from <i>Westside Story</i>
Stevens, <i>Method of Movement</i>	Richards, <i>Sight Reading for Mallets</i>	
Stout, <i>Ideo-Kinetic Studies</i>	Richards, <i>Essential Sight Reading</i>	
Zeltsman, <i>Four-Mallet Marimba Playing</i>	Van Geem, <i>4 Mallet Democracy for Marimba</i>	

Figure 9.2 contains solo repertoire for keyboard instruments. The representative material is separated into three sections, based on ability level.

**Figure 9.2. Keyboard repertoire**

<b>Beginning-Intermediate</b>	<b>Intermediate-Advanced</b>	<b>Extremely Advanced</b>
Bach, <i>Violin Sonatas and Partitas (Selections)</i>	Abe, <i>Frogs</i>	Abe, <i>Prism Rhapsody</i>
Davila, <i>Impressions in Wood</i>	Abe, <i>Michi</i>	Abe, <i>Dream of the Cherry Blossoms</i>
Diemer, <i>Toccata</i>	Bach, <i>Six Cello Suites (selections)</i>	Bach, <i>Violin Sonata No. 1, Fugue in g minor</i>
Ford, <i>Marimba Technique Through Music</i>	Bergamo, <i>Three Pieces for Winter Solstice</i>	Bobo, <i>Gordon's Bicycle</i>
Gipson, <i>Prayer</i>	Creston, <i>Concertino</i>	Bobo, <i>Two Fountains</i>
Glennie, <i>Three Chorales</i>	Deane, <i>Mourning Dove Sonnet</i>	Broström, <i>Scene for Vibraphone</i>
Gomez, <i>Rain Dance</i>	Edwards, <i>Marimba Dances</i>	Burritt, <i>Azure</i>
Gomez, <i>Etude in d minor</i>	Ford, <i>Polaris</i>	Burritt, <i>Caritas</i>
Green, <i>Xylophone Rags (selections)</i>	Gipson, <i>Monograph IV</i>	Druckman, <i>Reflections on the Nature of Water</i>
Kite, <i>Reading Mallet Percussion Music (selections)</i>	Kurka, <i>Concerto for Marimba</i>	Ewazen, <i>Northern Lights</i>
Kreisler, <i>Tambourin Chinois</i>	Miki, <i>Time</i>	Hamilton, <i>Recurrences</i>
McMillan, <i>Masterpieces for Marimba</i>	Miyoshi, <i>Torse III</i>	Hamilton, <i>Interzones</i>
Peters, <i>Sea Refractions</i>	Musser, <i>Etude in B Major Op. 6 No. 9</i>	Lansky, <i>Three Moves for Marimba</i>
Peters, <i>Yellow After the Rain</i>	Musser, <i>Etude in C Major Op. 6 No. 10</i>	Psathas, <i>One Study, One Summary</i>
Pitfield, <i>Sonata</i>	Rosauro, <i>Concerto for Marimba</i>	Sammut, <i>Variations on Porgy and Bess</i>
Rosauro, <i>Seven Brazilian Children Songs</i>	Smadbeck, <i>Rhythm Song</i>	Schwantner, <i>Velocities</i>
Rosauro, <i>Three Preludes</i>	Smadbeck, <i>Virginia Tate</i>	Serry, <i>Night Rhapsody</i>
Schmitt, <i>Ghanaia</i>	Smadbeck, <i>Etudes No. 1-3</i>	Thomas, <i>Merlin</i>
Tanner, <i>Sonata for Marimba</i>	Sammut, <i>Four Rotations for Marimba</i>	Vinao, <i>Khan Variations</i>
Živković, <i>Funny Mallets, vol. 1-3</i>	Sejourne, <i>Nancy</i>	Živkovic, <i>Ilijas</i>
	Stout, <i>Two Mexican Dances</i>	
	Stout, <i>Astral Dance</i>	
	Tyson, <i>Cricket Sang and Set the Sun</i>	

The materials listed in figures 9.1 and 9.2 are not comprehensive, and there will be differing opinions by teachers of what material students should know. For the course content to fully cover all areas of keyboard performance, one needs to be decisive on what material to recommend while at the same time providing opportunity for the student to explore new repertoire. Solo repertoire at the keyboard has grown tremendously throughout the twentieth century and continues to be the largest body of literature available in the percussion community. Providing a foundation of recommended keyboard solos for marimba, vibraphone, and xylophone allows for further discovery of solo and ensemble repertoire that will grow the student and further their musical development.

The author-designed rubric in figure 9.3 is a tool for assessing each student. Using this rubric, the teacher will be able to identify specific ability levels and develop a plan for the student. It will also aid in selecting appropriate material to assign for the applied lesson.

**Figure 9.3 Keyboard evaluation**

Evaluation	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV	Level V	Level VI
Hand position/ Technique						
Touch and Dexterity						
Sound production						
Two-mallet technique						
Four-mallet technique						
Sight reading						

**Level I:** Serious gaps in technical development with limited knowledge in tone production and limited ability at the keyboard to demonstrate fundamental skills.

**Level II:** Fundamental understanding and demonstration of technical facility with basic knowledge of proper sound production. Basic understanding of two-mallet technique and scales/arpeggios with limited reading ability.

**Level III:** A basic understanding of technique, sound production, and touch with the ability to perform two and four mallet solos/etudes with proper technique and touch with a reasonable amount of accuracy. Able to sight read basic short etudes with few errors.

**Level IV:** Able to demonstrate proper technique with little to no errors with a high degree of accuracy. Able to perform intermediate to advanced etudes with little error and a solid sense of timing and control. Advanced degree of technical facility with the ability to sight read without errors.

**Level V:** Firm grasp of advanced techniques at the keyboard with a very high quality of touch and sound production. Ability to perform advanced etudes/solos with a high degree of musical and technical accuracy. Solid understanding of orchestral excerpts and able to sight read advanced etudes with little to no errors.

**Level VI:** An extremely high level of ability at the keyboard with no gaps in technical development. Performance ability in highly advanced contemporary repertoire appropriate for a senior or graduate recital. Ability to sight read advanced etudes with no errors and exceptional timing and pulse control.

Keyboard studies within this curriculum are a significant part of the student's development. It takes into consideration the technical and musical skills specific to the keyboard and those that are shared between other instruments. Additionally, sight reading at the keyboard is a significant part of the curriculum with the intent of developing the ability to read music rhythmically and melodically. The content within keyboard studies takes into consideration the instruments application within an ensemble, as a solo instrument, and provides an opportunity for students to create their own concepts of musical expression.

## **Chapter 10: Timpani Studies**

Teaching timpani at the undergraduate level can be a daunting task for some teachers depending on previous experience of the student. With technical and musical development on all percussion instruments primarily focused in ensemble performance experiences prior to the undergraduate level, many aspects of these instruments that require individual attention go unfulfilled. This means that students may have limited exposure to timpani due to lack of instruction and access. Building strong fundamentals on timpani is another essential element that will require drawing connections to other instruments within the percussion family and to the student's theory, history, and ear training classes.

Unless the student has studied with a private teacher, they may have gaps in their understanding and performance of this instrument that is considered central in percussion education. The initial contact with timpani in an undergraduate education should come in conjunction with students' theory and ear training. The connection here is that timpani performance relies on sound production and intonation, regardless of specific technique. Developing accurate sound production, intonation, and ear training is where the student should begin.

With this idea in mind, it is best to wait to start timpani instruction for at least one semester until fundamentals in keyboard and snare drum have been solidified and the student has had experience in ear training classes recognizing and singing diatonic intervals. Waiting to start will help the student and the teacher identify technical aspects of timpani performance that are shared with other percussion instruments. Identifying connections can make these initial lessons go faster for the student once they apply wrist

strokes, rebound, and lift that have been covered in snare drum and keyboard. With the additional elements of timpani pedagogy involving the ability to match pitch and identify intervals, a significant amount of time will be spent on tuning, pitch identification, and understanding the mechanics of the instrument. These initial steps in the course content will require instructor handouts, exercises, and a great deal of mirroring/modeling of technical elements with the student.

Technical development of timpani technique with the hands can take place away from the drums as well. Borrowing hand development exercises found in *Stick Control*, by George Lawrence Stone is one way to refer back to snare drum studies and apply them to timpani with only slight alterations in technique and application of the material to the instrument. In the case of using *Stick Control* as a supplemental tool for hand development, the student can play directly on a surface that will give them no response or rebound. This will train the hands to lift the stick off the surface, a method that will aid in developing their technique which will affect their sound, touch, and volume when performing. Using varied methods during the introductory phase of teaching timpani can benefit the student as they progress to solo repertoire and orchestral excerpts, which serve as a primary source of material for instruction.

The representative material in tables 10.1 and 10.2 offer a broad perspective on how to apply the course content for each student. Not all material will be used throughout the students' undergraduate career. The material is intended to provide many resources to address specific musical and technical developments. Since each student is different and will have differing objectives, the content will vary for each student.



**Figure 10.1. Timpani technical studies and etudes**

Technique	Etudes/Sight-Reading	Orchestral Excerpts
Delecluse, <i>30 Studies for Timpani vol. 1-3</i>	Carroll, <i>Exercises, Etudes, and Solos for the Timpani</i>	Carlyss, <i>Symphonic Repertoire for Timpani-Beethoven</i>
Delecluse, <i>50 Daily Exercises for Timpani</i>	Delecluse, <i>Twenty Studies for Timpani</i>	Goldenberg, <i>Classical Overtures for Timpani</i>
Dowd, <i>Well-Tempered Timpanist</i>	Firth, <i>The Solo Timpanist</i>	Max, <i>Orchestral Excerpts for Timpani</i>
Friese/Lepak, <i>Timpani Method</i>	Gay, <i>Pedal to the Kettle</i>	Tafoya, <i>Working Timpanists Survival Guide</i>
Goodman, <i>Modern Method for Timpani</i>	Fink, <i>Musical Etudes for the Advanced Timpanist</i>	Tafoya, <i>Beyond the Audition Screen</i>
Hinger, <i>Technique for the Virtuoso Timpanist</i>	Firth, <i>The Solo Timpanist</i>	Beethoven, <i>Symphonies 1, 3, 5, 7, 9</i>
Leonard, <i>Pedal Technique for Timpani</i>	Hinger, <i>Solos for the Virtuoso Timpanist</i>	Brahms, <i>Symphony no. 1, no. 4</i>
Peters, <i>Fundamental Method for Timpani</i>	Hochrainer, <i>Etuden for Timpani</i>	Hindemith, <i>Symphonic Metamorphoses</i>
	Woud, <i>Symphonic Studies for Timpani</i>	Mozart, <i>Symphony no. 39</i>
		Schuman, <i>New England Triptych</i>
		Sibelius, <i>Finlandia</i>
		Stravinsky, <i>Rite of Spring</i>

## Figure 10.2. Timpani solo repertoire

Beginning-Intermediate	Intermediate-Advanced	Extremely Advanced
Beck, <i>Ten Intermediate Timpani Studies</i>	Beck, <i>Sonata for Timpani</i>	Carter, <i>Eight Pieces for Four Timpani</i>
Carroll, <i>Exercises, Etudes, and Solos for the Timpanist</i>	Beck, <i>Modulations</i>	Daugherty, <i>Raise the Roof</i>
Davila, <i>El Gran Temblor</i>	Beck, <i>Three Movements for Five Timpani</i>	Hamilton, <i>Rituals for Solo Timpani</i>
Firth, <i>Solo Impressions for Four Timpani</i>	Bergamo, <i>Four Pieces for Timpani</i>	Leonard, <i>Canticle</i>
Gay, <i>Fear Cage (duet)</i>	Cahn, <i>Raga No. 1</i>	Kraft, <i>Images for Four Timpani, five cymbals, and Tam-tam</i>
Gerber, <i>Celebration Suite for Timpani</i>	Chavez, <i>Partita for Solo Timpani</i>	Kraft, <i>Concerto for Timpani and Orchestra</i>
Goodman, <i>Ballad for the Dance</i>	Deane, <i>Prelude I for Solo Timpani</i>	Oliverio, <i>Timpani Concerto No. 1</i>
Hinger, <i>Solos for the Virtuoso Timpanist</i>	Delecluse, <i>Challenge I</i>	Peck, <i>Harmonic Rhythm</i>
Houllif, <i>Four Verses for Timpani</i>	Delecluse, <i>Challenge II</i>	Peyton, <i>The Final Precipice</i>
Kraft, <i>M's P</i>	Griffith, <i>Plagal Alterations</i>	Psathas, <i>Planet Damnation</i>
Peters, <i>Primal Mood for Four Timpani</i>	Rosauro, <i>Concerto for Timpani</i>	Sarmientos, <i>Concerto for Five Timpani and Orchestra</i>
Schinstine, <i>Sonata No. 1</i>	Williams, <i>Variations for Solo Kettledrums</i>	Serry, <i>Conversations (duet)</i>
	Zivkovic, <i>Cadenza</i>	

Instruction on timpani is a process that will take many students from the fundamentals of stroke and sound production through solo repertoire within their undergraduate career. Unlike keyboard and snare drum, students may not start with timpani as their first instrument due to limited experience prior to college. This should be seen as an opportunity for both the student and teacher to develop a skill set with an open mind and use it as an advantage to greatly improve their concept of sound, touch, and expression.

In regard to literature available for timpani, there is a growing amount of repertoire available to percussionists at all levels. Orchestral excerpts are still a

fundamental element to timpani pedagogy due to the nature of the instrument being primarily found within the orchestra/band, and not as a solo instrument. Understanding the role of timpani within an ensemble setting through the study of excerpts will help students in performance and expand their knowledge of orchestral repertoire and analysis. Excerpts will also prove beneficial for students who plan to audition for professional orchestras, military bands, summer music festivals, and graduate percussion programs.

While the focus on percussion programs is to develop musical and technical proficiencies for the undergraduate student, there is an additional responsibility for the student to make themselves marketable and able to thrive in a highly competitive performance and audition world. With professional auditions becoming rarer and more highly competitive in both military bands and professional orchestras, providing the student with the tools and skill set to be competitive is the responsibility of the teacher within the undergraduate percussion program.

The author-created rubric in figure 10.3 was designed to evaluate a student's proficiency on technical and musical demands typically found in timpani performance. The intent is to identify areas that will require specific attention to fully develop students as a timpanist.

**Figure 10.3. Timpani evaluation**

Evaluation	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV	Level V	Level VI
Hand position/ Technique						
Touch and Dexterity						
Sound production						
Tuning						
Rolls						
Pedaling						
Sight reading						

**Level I:** Serious gaps in technical development with limited knowledge in tone production and limited ability on timpani to demonstrate fundamental skills.

**Level II:** Fundamental understanding and demonstration of technical facility with basic knowledge of proper sound production. Basic understanding of timpani technique and tuning with limited reading ability.

**Level III:** A basic understanding of technique, sound production, and touch with the ability to perform short solos/etudes with proper technique and touch, with a reasonable amount of accuracy. Able to sight read basic two-drum etudes with few errors.

**Level IV:** Ability to demonstrate proper technique with little to no errors with a high degree of accuracy. Able to perform intermediate to advanced etudes with little error and a solid sense of timing and control. Able to accurately tune and change pitches based on intervallic relationships. Advanced degree of technical facility with the ability to sight read without errors.

**Level V:** Firm grasp of advanced techniques on timpani with a very high quality of touch and sound production. Ability to perform advanced etudes/solos with a high degree of musical and technical accuracy. Solid understanding of orchestral excerpts and able to sight read advanced etudes with little to no errors.

**Level VI:** An extremely high level of ability on timpani with no gaps in technical facility. Performance ability in highly advanced contemporary repertoire and orchestral excerpts appropriate for a senior or graduate recital. Ability to sight read advanced etudes with no errors and exceptional timing and pulse control.

The study of timpani plays an important part to fully develop students as percussionists. It takes into consideration the current ability level of students and

provides a structure to develop their skills during their undergraduate education. The content is related to other areas in percussion to make connections with snare drum, keyboard, and drum set studies. Additionally, it draws attention to how the student's academic courses in music history, theory, and ear training are related to their applied lessons.

## **Chapter 11: Drum set and Afro-Cuban Studies**

The fourth area within the percussion curriculum is drum set and Afro-Cuban percussion. Drum set and Afro-Cuban percussion is an area where many students likely have had the least exposure before their undergraduate education. There can be many reasons for this. If we look at how percussion is taught in school music programs, there can be situations where students have limited access to serious drum set or Afro-Cuban instruments within an ensemble performance-based program. While many school programs will have jazz ensembles that use drum set, there can be a limit on the number of students who will have access and instruction.

Students who did not have a focus on drum set prior to their undergraduate education are at a disadvantage. It is the intent of this curriculum to include drum set and Afro-Cuban percussion for all students so they can build a solid foundation performing different styles and genres of music. For the advanced drum set students, there is an opportunity to expand their skills through more demanding content as outlined in figure 11.2.

The reason these instruments are part of the undergraduate curriculum is to further reinforce the philosophy of a well-rounded education. There is an incorporation of classical and non-classical genres in performance and education in the twenty-first century. Band and orchestral composers are incorporating drum set and Afro-Cuban percussion into their orchestrations in addition to musicals, chamber music, and jazz ensembles. The ability to perform on drum set is essential for a performance career in and out of the orchestral world. Military bands often require drum set as part of their auditions as part of their need for diverse musicians. Professional orchestra auditions may


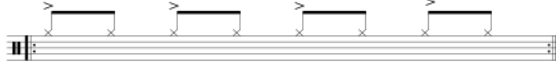









require drum set as well. Orchestras will often have an individual designated as the drum set player in addition to their regular duties within the percussion section.

Beyond the element of performance and sustainability, drum set and Afro-Cuban studies provides exposure and appreciation to additional genres of music outside the Western classical tradition. Jazz is now an essential component to music education within the university with performance ensembles and academic courses dedicated to the subject. In addition to the vast body of jazz literature, styles across all popular genres should be studied to provide a breadth to the undergraduate curriculum. Technical and musical development on the drum set will serve students well in their undergraduate education. Drum set studies will provide the student with a better sense of time, listening skills, soloing and improvisation, and experience on various styles within jazz and popular music.

The intent of this curriculum is to design a course of study that will be balanced in the fundamentals, gradually increasing in difficulty so students can continue progressing beyond their exposure in their undergraduate education. Drawing from material that is familiar, the beginning drum set students can use material from their snare drum studies and apply them directly to the drum set. Figure 11.1 contains exercises used in conjunction with Ted Reed's book, *Syncopation*. These basic exercises are intended to build independence of the limbs as students begin drum set studies. The material from *Syncopation* is similar to the snare drum exercises found in figure 8.3.

**Figure 11.1 Application of *Syncopation* to the Drum set**

**Independance exercises for Drumset**  
Use with *Syncopation*, by Ted Reed

	Syncopation melody in bass drum.
	Syncopation melody in bass and snare. Short notes on snare long notes on bass.
	Syncopation melody in bass drum
	Syncopation melody in bass and snare. Short notes on snare long notes on bass.
	Shuffle syncopation melody in bass drum.
	Shuffle syncopation melody in bass and snare. Short notes on snare, long notes on bass.
	Syncopation melody on cross stick.
	Swing syncopation melody on snare.
	Swing syncopation on bass. Cross stick on beat 4.
	Swing syncopation bass and snare. Short notes on snare, long notes on bass.
	Syncopation melody on snare. CUT TIME



The content within drum set studies covers varying styles of music. Swing, rock, funk, and Latin styles of drumming, along with their sub-genres, will be studied through a combination of books, recordings, transcriptions, and live performance opportunities created for the student to gain practical experience. In *Studio and Big Band Drumming* author Steve Houghton states, “One of the most important elements of contemporary drumming is the understanding of all styles of music. The drummer who can sound “authentic” in every situation will be called upon more frequently.”<sup>31</sup> This statement places the importance of knowing many styles when studying drum set and is related to the idea of a well-rounded percussionist. The result is to provide a foundation so students can perform and teach music from many different genres and build their skills to continue developing as a musician.

In addition to method books and transcriptions, active listening to recordings of many different artists is used frequently in drum set instruction. Listening and studying recordings of drum set artists allows students to hear how the drum set has developed over time and stylistically, how it has developed throughout the twentieth century. The Percussive Arts Society (PAS), through their drum set committee, has published an “Essential Listening Guide” for students and teachers to help identify drummers and tunes from a wide-range of styles and time periods. The listening guide “.... offers a sampling of recognized musical genius, in a variety of categories, to better serve both the beginning to professional student and teacher alike.”<sup>32</sup> This resource features artists

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<sup>31</sup> Houghton, Steve. *Studio & big band drumming: interpretation of contemporary studio and big band drum parts for today's ensemble drummer*. Oskaloosa, IA: C.L. Barnhouse Co., 1998.

<sup>32</sup> Essential Listening for Drum Set. November 2016. Accessed January 03, 2018.  
<http://www.pas.org/resources/education/essential-listening-for-drum-set>.

from different genres with recordings that have been selected to reflect a variety of drumming styles. This “Essential Listening Guide” is a useful tool for studying the drum set pioneers and how they have influenced teachers and students.

Figure 11.2 is a representative collection of method books for the drum set and Afro-Cuban studies. The different categories in figure 11.2 can overlap as many of the books are designed to work on styles, technique, and reading.

**Figure 11.2 Drum set/Afro-Cuban styles and technical studies**

Technique/General	Styles/Chart Reading	Afro-Cuban
Black/Feldstein, <i>Alfred's Beginning Drum set Method</i>	Garibaldi, <i>Future Sounds</i>	Hidalgo, <i>The Ultimate Conguero vol. 1</i>
Cameron, <i>Brushworks</i>	Houghton, <i>Drum set 101</i>	Kalani, <i>All About Hand Percussion</i>
Chaffee, <i>Technique Patterns</i>	Houghton, <i>Essential Styles vol. 1-2</i>	Sanchez, <i>Conga Cookbook</i>
Chaffee, <i>Sticking Patterns</i>	Houghton, <i>Studio and Big Band Drumming</i>	Spiro, <i>Introduction to the Conga Drum (DVD)</i>
Chester, <i>The New Breed</i>	Houghton, <i>The Drum set Soloist</i>	Spiro, <i>Conga Drummer's Guidebook</i>
Chapin, <i>Advanced Techniques for the Modern Drummer</i>	Houghton, <i>The Ultimate Drum set Reading Anthology</i>	Spiro, <i>The Language of the Masters</i>
Dahlgren/Fine, <i>4-Way Coordination</i>	Igoe, <i>Groove Essentials</i>	Spiro, <i>congamasterclass.com</i>
Erschine, <i>Drum set Essentials vol. 1-3</i>	Latham, <i>Advanced Funk Studies</i>	Uribe, <i>Essence of Brazilian Percussion and Drum Set</i>
Morello, <i>Master Studies</i>	Malabe, <i>Afro-Cuban Rhythms for Drum set</i>	Uribe, <i>Essence of Afro-Cuban Percussion and Drum Set</i>
Reed, <i>Syncopation for the Modern Drummer</i>	Morgan, <i>The Jazz Drummers Reading Workbook</i>	Uribe, <i>Essence of Brazilian Percussion and Drum Set</i>
Soph, <i>Essential Techniques for the Drum set</i>	Riley, <i>The Art of Bop Drumming</i>	
Stone, <i>Stick Control</i>	Riley, <i>Beyond Bop Drumming</i>	
Thigpen, <i>The Sound of Brushes</i>	Uribe, <i>Essence of Afro-Cuban Percussion and Drum Set</i>	
	Uribe, <i>Essence of Brazilian Percussion and Drum Set</i>	

Many areas in percussion are interrelated with elements of course content that are shared between instruments. This is especially true between snare drum and drum set. Technical studies on snare drum, such as the *PAS 40 International Drum Rudiments*, *Stick Control* by George Lawrence Stone, and *Syncopation* by Ted Reed directly relate to the drum set. Technique applicable to additional interrelated instruments can be seen between drum set and timpani technique with French grip, where the hand is turned and the thumb is facing up. This is a very similar approach to how one would play a ride cymbal. In relation to other percussion areas, drum set performance is a very physical activity that involves the entire body. Developing all four limbs to work both dependently and independently, while gaining spatial awareness can be related to performing multiple percussion solo repertoire.

In addition to technical developments, keyboard studies and drum set can make the student more aware of phrasing, thematic ideas, and playing more melodically. Thinking melodically on the drum set can open players up to more opportunities of expression and assist them in creating new grooves and content when soloing and improvising. Utilizing skills in differing areas of percussion can aid in the complete development of the student as a professional. A serious focus on drum set studies as part of the undergraduate curriculum, can improve students' skills regarding time and pulse control, reading, improvisation, and listening while developing a deeper appreciation of genres and styles of music outside of the classical tradition.

Afro-Cuban music within the undergraduate curriculum is an area that will aid students in becoming a well-rounded musician through the study of folkloric and popular Afro-Cuban styles. The content is intended to introduce concepts of proper technique and

musical genres that many students have not experienced. Beginning with music from the folkloric tradition, students will be able to understand its origins and how it has been adapted into popular culture.

Regarding the relationship between Afro-centric music and American popular music, Nolan Warden writes, “In the early to mid-1900’s, when people from the U.S. could still freely travel to Cuba, Cuban rhythms were picked up and popularized by the U.S. media.”<sup>33</sup> As conga players began to perform throughout the United States in the early part of the twentieth century, the integration of the instrument and its associated musical styles spread through jazz, popular, and classical music. According to Nolan Warden, “Orchestral and band music has also made use of tumbadoras. Ever since the 1920s in Cuba, classically trained composers have been adding Afro-Cuban percussion to their orchestral pieces.”<sup>34</sup>

For this undergraduate curriculum, the focus on “world music” has a foundation in a genre that has been integrated into Western popular music. Afro-Cuban music within this curriculum will provide insight and practical application to the performance of instruments and musical styles within this genre. The prominence of Afro-Cuban music in Western culture is the reason this genre has been included. This leads to the rationale of a focus on Afro-centric music as opposed to music from other non-Western cultures. Popular and classical music has borrowed from Afro-Cuban traditions, and it is the responsibility of percussionists to possess the skills to perform the instruments and properly interpret the musical styles. While music from cultures outside of the European

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<sup>33</sup> Warden, Nolan. "A History of the Conga Drum." *Percussive Notes* 42, no. 1 (February 2005): 8-15.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid

tradition have become part of world music, each genre deserves dedicated attention by a teacher who is knowledgeable in that area.

The Afro-Cuban course content will come from a variety of sources ranging from technical studies via method books to videos and audio recordings. It will also be important for the student to understand the historical and cultural significance of the music and its role in the Cuban culture through books and articles. Because Afro-Cuban percussion requires multiple players, applied lessons will consist of individual and group instruction. This method of group instruction will provide a complete understanding of the music and style in context and an opportunity for students to work together providing constructive feedback on technical and musical ideas, communication, and the development of improvisational skills.

According to B. Michael Williams, “Practicing world percussion requires many of the same skills employed in mastering any musical instrument, but there are also broader issues to consider, especially when one is learning an instrument from another culture.”<sup>35</sup> From an educational perspective, the inclusion of hand drumming is becoming more commonplace in percussion education in addition to academic courses on world music. Williams continues by stating, “the push for “multicultural” education has led to the adoption of tumbadoras as a catch-all instrument.”<sup>36</sup>

The author-created rubric in figure 11.3 is used to determine the appropriate level of instruction for the student. It is designed to examine multiple areas within drum set and Afro-Cuban percussion including technical proficiency and knowledge of various styles.

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<sup>35</sup> Williams, B. Michael. "Insights on Practicing World Percussion." *Percussive Notes* 41, no. 2 (April 2003): 44-49.

<sup>36</sup> Warden, Nolan. "A History of the Conga Drum." *Percussive Notes* 42, no. 1 (February 2005): 8-15.

**Figure 11.3. Drum set/Afro-Cuban evaluation**

Evaluation	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV	Level V	Level VI
Technical proficiency						
Independence						
Sound production and tone						
Styles						
Improvisation						
Sight/chart reading						
Popular/Folkloric						

**Level I:** Serious gaps in technical development with limited knowledge in touch, sound production, and styles, with limited ability on drum set and conga drum to demonstrate fundamental skills.

**Level II:** Fundamental understanding and demonstration of technical facility with basic knowledge of proper sound production and various tones. Basic understanding of technique with limited knowledge of various styles.

**Level III:** A basic understanding of technique, sound production, and touch. Ability to perform various styles with a reasonable amount of accuracy. Able to read and interpret basic drum charts. Basic understanding of popular Afro-Cuban styles with limited knowledge of folkloric traditions.

**Level IV:** Ability to demonstrate proper technique with few errors with a high degree of accuracy. Able to perform in various styles with few error while maintaining a solid sense of time and control. Ability to solo and improvise in various styles and be able to sight read and interpret drum charts without errors. The student is able to demonstrate various Afro-Cuban styles authentically on multiple instruments. Able to demonstrate an understanding of the role Afro-Cuban percussion in popular and folkloric styles.

**Level V:** Firm grasp of advanced techniques with a very high quality of touch and sound production. Ability to perform at an advanced level in various styles with a high degree of musical and technical accuracy. Solid understanding of pedagogy and able to sight read advanced charts with little to no errors. Very high level of comprehension of conga drumming and soloing/improvisation. Ability to demonstrate a high degree of competency in popular and folkloric styles.

**Level VI:** An extremely high level of ability with no gaps in technical facility with exceptional timing and pulse control. Performance ability in highly advanced and varied musical situations and styles appropriate for a graduate recital. Ability to sight read, lead an ensemble, and create charts with no errors.

The inclusion of drum set and Afro-Cuban percussion within the curriculum is intended to provide students the opportunity to expand their skill set in areas outside the Western classical tradition. For students who want to perform professionally, the ability to play many different instruments and styles will provide them with an opportunity to be successful in a diverse field. Providing a solid foundation on drum set and Afro-Cuban percussion will allow students to continue seeking opportunities where they can expand their skills in other areas of world and popular music.

## Chapter 12: Multiple Percussion

Multiple percussion is an area of study that primarily lives within solo contemporary repertoire. The study of multiple percussion music within the undergraduate curriculum typically revolves around recital preparation which occurs toward the end of the students' undergraduate study. Multi-percussion does not typically receive the same level of attention as other areas previously mentioned. The reasons often revolve around the physical requirements and instruments needed to perform the repertoire. Another reason is due to the limited number of resources available through technical studies and etudes. Steve Weiss Music, a music retailer specializing in percussion, lists a total of twenty-eight books in their multi-percussion category, while there are over three-hundred titles listed for keyboard instruments.<sup>37</sup>

With limited resources available and the physical space and instrument requirements, multi-percussion study does receive limited attention compared to drum set, keyboard, timpani, and snare drum. However, multiple percussion within the university setting and percussion community is a genre that continues to grow with students beginning to specialize in the area.

Multiple percussion music connects many of the areas that have already been addressed within this undergraduate curriculum. It interrelates fundamental technique on snare drum, melodic development and phrasing concepts with keyboard studies, and particularly drum set performance where one is creating a cohesive idea with non-pitched instruments in a thoughtful and logical manner. One reason we do not see nearly as many

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<sup>37</sup> "Home." Method Books | Method Books | Steve Weiss Music. Accessed January 05, 2018. <https://www.steveweissmusic.com/category/multi-percussion-methods>.



multi-percussion etudes and technical studies available may be because we can draw from other areas prior to the study of the repertoire. With careful selection and use within the curriculum, multiple percussion solos can serve as a great resource for aiding in the musical development of the student. Al Payson states, "Playing multiple percussion music gets one listening for sound relationships as well as rhythm."<sup>38</sup> Much like performance and study on drum set, multiple percussion study provides an opportunity for creating one musical idea with a collection of different instruments. Payson continues, "It sharpens one's awareness of color, timbre, dynamic-balance, phrasing, and nuance, all of which are important building blocks for that ephemeral thing called musicianship."<sup>39</sup>

All areas within the percussion curriculum strive to enhance the students' musical development and experience. The inclusion of multiple percussion repertoire within the undergraduate experience provides musical insight and interpretation in an area that is unique in the classical tradition. Additionally, we see the historical significance of multiple percussion compositions through leading composers such as Roger Reynolds, Jennifer Higdon, and David Lang.

With the development of the multiple percussion genre, we see many of the seminal works written by non-percussionists. For Example, Igor Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat* (1918) is credited as being the first multiple percussion part written for a single performer. The first multiple percussion solo is John Cage's *27'10.554 for a Percussionist* (1956)<sup>40</sup>. Additional seminal works for solo multiple percussion include

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<sup>38</sup> Payson, Al. "Multiple Percussion at the School Level." *Percussive Notes* 11, no. 3 (1973): 16-17.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid

<sup>40</sup> Steven Schick, *The Percussionist's Art: Same Bed, Different Dreams* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2006), 4.

compositions by Charles Wourinen, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Morton Feldman, and Iannis Xenakis.

Challenges within this genre beyond technical facility lie within the notation of the music, instrument selection, and the need for individual interpretation of the written score. With Cage's *27'10.554" for a Percussionist*, there is a great amount of ambiguity in regard to instrument selection and the process in which it was composed through chance operations. Samuel Solomon notes, "Percussion instruments are divided into four groups: metal (M), wood (W), skin (S) and all others (A)... The choice of instruments and sounds within these specifications is determined by the performer"<sup>41</sup> This is a common occurrence within earlier multiple percussion repertoire. Additional examples can be found in *Psappha* by Iannis Xenakis, and Morton Feldman's *King of Denmark*. The experience of interpretation with non-traditional notation and instrument selection that is not pre-determined provides the student with the opportunity to make musical decisions and justifications based on their experience.

One area within this undergraduate curriculum guide that can enhance the student experience and connection with the genre is arrangements of shorter snare drum etudes as multi-percussion solos. This approach to multi-percussion repertoire allows students to gain familiarity and access to short multi-percussion solos that are arranged by the student. Arranging and composing for percussion within this genre can enable students to discover new and varied uses for material previously studied.

The material listed in figure 12.1 is a representation of multiple percussion repertoire. The list is not comprehensive and only represents some of the material

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<sup>41</sup> "John Cage - 27' 10.554" for a percussionist (1956)." Samuel Z Solomon. November 22, 2014. Accessed January 06, 2018. <http://szsolomon.com/john-cage-27-10-554-percussionist-1956/>.

available to percussionists within this genre. With new material being written every year, this list can be expanded and adjusted as needed. Much of the material represents new compositions by established composers and multiple percussion solos that have become the foundation of this genre.

**Figure 12.1. Multiple percussion repertoire**

<b>Beginning-Intermediate</b>	<b>Intermediate-Advanced</b>	<b>Extremely Advanced</b>
DeLancey, <i>Love of L'Histoire</i>	Bach, <i>Turkish Music</i>	Cage, <i>27'10.554" for a Percussionist</i>
Goldenberg, <i>Studies in Solo Percussion (selections)</i>	Bergamo, <i>Tanka</i>	Feldman, <i>King of Denmark</i>
Kraft, <i>Morris Dance</i>	Campbell, <i>Garage Drummer</i>	Ferneyhough, <i>Bone Alphabet</i>
Kraft, <i>English Suite</i>	Campbell, <i>Tork</i>	Gordon, <i>XY</i>
Kraft, <i>French Suite</i>	Hamilton, <i>Edge (Corrugated Box)</i>	Hamilton, <i>Portals</i>
Peters, <i>Perpetual Motion</i>	Hollinden, <i>Cold Pressed</i>	Lang, <i>The Anvil Chorus</i>
Peters, <i>Rondo</i>	Ishii, <i>Thirteen Drums</i>	Lansky, <i>Travel Diary</i>
Petrella, <i>The Multiple Percussion Book</i>	Kopetzki, <i>Canned Heat</i>	Nørgård, <i>I Ching</i>
Rosauro, <i>Cenas Amerindias</i>	Lang, <i>Unchained Melody</i>	Ptaszynska, <i>Space Model</i>
Udow, <i>The Contemporary Percussionist (selections)</i>	Martynciow, <i>La Festa per Due</i>	Ptaszynska, <i>Spider Walk</i>
	Martynciow, <i>Impressions</i>	Stockhausen, <i>Zyklus</i>
	Milhaud, <i>Concerto for Percussion</i>	Volans, <i>She Who Sleeps with a Small Blanket</i>
	Zivkovic, <i>Generally Spoken It's Nothing but Rhythm</i>	Xenakis, <i>Psappha</i>
		Xenakis, <i>Rebonds</i>

Incorporating multiple percussion into the undergraduate curriculum can develop slowly throughout the students' time. Outlining progressive repertoire that can challenge the student, provide insight into the compositional process, and provide an overview of

the almost limitless possibilities of combination of instruments can lead the student to further discovery of material available to them. While the repertoire covered throughout the study will be less than other areas such as keyboard and snare drum, careful selection of material that incorporates student interest as well as repertoire that requires levels of individual interpretation will aid the student in growing as a musician, incorporating skills into chamber and large ensemble repertoire.

## Chapter 13: Accessory Instruments

The study of accessory instruments is a necessary component of a fully developed contemporary percussionist. The term “accessory” is a broad term that includes many instruments percussionists are responsible for playing. The common instruments discussed in the applied setting are those typically found in orchestra and band literature; tambourine, triangle, castanets, and cymbals.

The challenge with incorporating these accessory instruments into course content is deciding what to teach, how to teach, and what material to use for each of these instruments. It is crucial to reinforce the importance of these instruments with the student and to stress the ability to perform them with confidence, precision, and attention to sound quality. In the orchestral and freelance world, the ability to perform these instruments effectively could be the difference in having a sustainable career or one that is struggling. According to Jonathan Latta, “these instruments aren’t as popular or glamorous among our students, and sometimes they get put at the bottom of our teaching list.”<sup>42</sup> While many recognize there is a lot of content to cover with a limited amount of time, the importance of these instruments is essential. Latta continues, “We as professionals, however, know the ability to play these instruments with confidence and artistry can often mean the difference between keeping or losing a gig.”<sup>43</sup>

The most common material used in studying accessory instruments is through orchestral excerpts. Studying excerpts is a very practical method for students and teachers due to the fact that, like multiple percussion, there are limited resources that will focus on

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<sup>42</sup> Latta, Jonathan R. "How to Teach Accessory Percussion." *Percussive Notes* 52, no. 1 (January 2014): 26-29.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid

the instruments alone. Excerpts are used because they provide a short musical example that demonstrates technical and musical ability. Additionally, using excerpts for these instruments provides students with the experience necessary to audition for orchestras, military bands, summer festivals, or graduate programs.

There are additional ways to practice these instruments that may prove challenging and can provide connections to material that has been studied previously. An example of this can be found by performing snare drum etudes on tambourine.

*Intermediate Snare Drum Studies* by Mitchell Peters can be used to refine and discover approaches to the tambourine that may not be found in orchestral excerpts. Many of the etudes in this book can be directly transferred to the tambourine and triangle to refine musical and technical skills that can occur in performance situations. Ben Miller discusses this topic and provides insight into practicing these instruments;<sup>44</sup>

1. *Experiment with the instruments to find as many different timbres as possible.*
2. *Work to develop a consistent sound.*
3. *Use exercises from beginning snare drum methods.*
4. *Be aware of attacks and releases*
5. *Practice at various speeds and dynamic levels.*
6. *Listen to recordings*
7. *Be patient.*

The points made by Miller relate to all percussion instruments, however, it is particularly true for accessory instruments. While limited, some educational material is available specifically for accessory instruments. Keith Aleo's *Complementary Percussion*<sup>45</sup> is written for this specific purpose. This book places these instruments in the

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<sup>44</sup> Miller, Ben F. "Practicing the Accessory Percussion Instruments." *Percussive Notes* 29, no. 2 (December 1990): 25-26.

<sup>45</sup> Aleo, Keith. *Complementary Percussion*. New York, NY: Bachovich Publishing, 2011.

spotlight with written solos and duets along with technical exercises to accompany each etude. By using varied methods and materials for instruction, we are attempting to reinforce the importance of these instruments by emphasizing how they can be practiced in creative ways. The material presented here provides insight into creating a varied method of instruction for these instruments.

The orchestral excerpts outlined in Figure 13.1 were selected based on their use in orchestral and military band auditions and from Richard Weiner's article, "Symphony Percussion Audition Repertoire."<sup>46</sup> In this article Weiner outlines orchestral excerpts based on their frequency of use in professional auditions.

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<sup>46</sup> Weiner, Richard. "Symphony Percussion Audition Repertoire." *Percussive Notes* 37, no. 4 (August 1999): 17-19.

**Figure 13.1. Accessory instrument excerpts and methods**

<b>Tambourine</b>	<b>Triangle</b>	<b>Cymbals</b>	<b>Castanets</b>	<b>Bass Drum</b>	<b>Method Books</b>
Berlioz, <i>Roman Carnival Overture</i>	Berlioz, <i>Roman Carnival Overture</i>	Debussy, <i>La Mer</i>	Debussy, <i>Iberia</i>	Mahler, <i>Symphony No. 3</i>	Aleo, <i>Complementary Percussion</i>
Bizet, <i>Carmen, Prelude from suite No. 1</i>	Brahms, <i>Symphony No. 4</i>	Mussorgsky, <i>Night on Bald Mountain</i>	Rimsky-Korsakov, <i>Capriccio Espagnol</i>	Sousa, <i>Washington Post (bass drum and cymbal)</i>	Denov, <i>The Art of Cymbal Playing</i>
Bizet, <i>Carmen, Dance Boheme from suite No. 2</i>	Liszt, <i>Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-flat</i>	Rachmaninoff, <i>Piano Concerto No. 2</i>	Saint-Saëns, <i>Danse Bacchanale from Samson and Dalila</i>	Stravinsky, <i>Rite of Spring</i>	Epstein, <i>Cymbalisms</i>
Dvorak, <i>Carnival Overture</i>	Rimsky-Korsakov, <i>Capriccio Espagnol</i>	Tchaikovsky, <i>Romeo and Juliet Overture</i>		Stravinsky, <i>Petrouchka (1947) bass drum and cymbal</i>	Payson, <i>Techniques of Playing Bass Drum, Cymbals, and Accessories</i>
Ravel, <i>Rapsodie Espagnol</i>	Tchaikovsky, <i>Overture from the Nutcracker</i>	Tchaikovsky, <i>Symphony No. 4</i>		Tchaikovsky, <i>Symphony No. 4</i>	
Stravinsky, <i>Petrouchka (1947)</i>					
Tchaikovsky, <i>Trepak from the Nutcracker</i>					

Using excerpts, custom exercises, snare drum etudes, and original compositions will provide a more complete and in-depth study of these instruments. Finding multiple ways to study these instruments can lead to greater proficiency and practical application. This will be beneficial to students as they perform in instrumental ensembles in the university and as they begin to perform and teach professionally.



## **Chapter 14: Curriculum Planning**

Looking at the complete picture of the undergraduate curriculum, one needs to consider how these areas will be integrated into the four-year degree program. Within all subjects, there is opportunity for multiple areas of instruction to occur simultaneously. With the amount of material covered throughout the degree program, it is necessary to formulate a plan that will address how these areas will be discussed and provide an articulated plan for achievement. As students move through their degree program, material can be assigned independently so there is continued growth outside of the focused content area. For example, a student studying snare drum and timpani can also work on keyboard repertoire where preparation will take several weeks before any substantial progress has been made. This will allow the student to work independently, providing them an opportunity to organize and manage their time to balance practice sessions in different areas.

Prior to any independent work, using the student self-assessment, audition notes, and instructor evaluation will help establish a base for where each student will begin and what content areas will be addressed. This will provide an insight to the students' technical and musical development, areas that require greater focus, and areas where the student excels. Using this documentation over time can show where students have made improvements while continuing to develop their skills in areas that require greater attention.

For all students in their first semester, along with their main content areas, the study of accessory instruments will be added. The reason for the inclusion of accessory instruments at the beginning of their applied lessons is because they are not typically

discussed within a high school program. Integrating these instruments into applied lessons from the beginning will serve the ensembles and instrumental music area as a whole and establish the importance of these instruments in a more professional setting.

Including these instruments will also aid in training the student to develop effective practice routines and time management. While there is no magic number of hours a student should practice, consistency and daily practice is crucial to continued development in any activity. With the addition of practice on accessory instruments, the teacher can assist students in developing an effective practice routine by using these small instruments as an example of how to balance their time in multiple areas.

Time management and creating effective practice routines are subjects that need to be reinforced from the beginning of the students' undergraduate career. College can be very challenging. For music students the challenges are even greater due to the demands of individual work outside the classroom and performance requirements within the major. Jason Baker's article, *Time Management for College Percussion Students* elaborates on this idea, "While college curricula are designed to challenge students, those enrolled in music programs face additional demands on their time: performance ensembles, applied lessons, and degree-specific coursework beginning in the first semester of study, along with general education classes, to name a few."<sup>47</sup> Using the initial lesson meetings to reinforce time management and practice routines will help students as expectations continue to rise. The weekly practice example in Figure 14.1 outlines a routine that can incorporate multiple areas with focus on accessory instruments, snare drum, and keyboard studies. This weekly practice schedule can be integrated into the student's

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<sup>47</sup> Baker, Jason. "Time Management for College Percussion Students." *Percussive Notes* 54, no. 2 (May 2016): 34-36.

academic schedule so they can begin to build dedicated practice time based on the content within their applied lessons. This is a routine that should be closely monitored by the teacher at the beginning of the semester to assist the student in establishing good practice habits. Not all areas will be covered in daily practice. Content areas can be spaced out throughout the week in order for the student to focus on specific areas. This table assumes a minimum of two to three hours of practice that is distributed throughout the day to accommodate academic and performance ensemble schedules.

### 14.1 Weekly practice routine schedule

<i>Content</i>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
<i>Snare</i>	X		X		X		X
<i>Keyboard</i>		X		X		X	X
<i>Cymbals</i>	X		X		X		X
<i>Tambourine</i>		X		X		X	X
<i>Triangle</i>	X				X		X

The student can adapt the structure in Figure 14.1 into their practice routines throughout their undergraduate career. Content areas should be adjusted as the lesson material changes. I encourage students to break-up their practice routine throughout the day in order to have a focused practice session that has specific goals.

We can also use a similar structure to establish big picture goals for the student throughout their undergraduate career. How the eight-semester program is structured will set expectations and long-term goals for students. Without any macro-level structure to the program, it is possible to become fixated in one area at the expense of others. Not every content area will be addressed in each semester, and as students make progress the teacher can determine content that will require individual attention.

The sample content plan in Figure 14.2 outlines the specific areas of instruction and when they would be studied in the applied lesson. Within the undergraduate plan the student will cover six semesters of keyboard, five semesters of timpani and snare drum, and two semesters of drum set, Afro-Cuban, multiple percussion, and accessory instruments. In regard to the accessory instrument category, the student will begin with these instruments to gain fundamental understanding and technical proficiencies, returning to them in the sixth semester with the study of orchestral excerpts to provide greater refinement.

**Figure 14.2 Sample Undergraduate content plan**

	1. Fall	2. Spring	3. Fall	4. Spring	5. Fall	6. Spring	7. Fall	8. Spring
<i>Keyboard</i>	X	X		X	X		X	X
<i>Snare drum</i>	X	X				X	X	X
<i>Timpani</i>		X	X		X		X	X
<i>Drum set</i>			X	X				
<i>Afro-Cuban</i>			X	X				
<i>Multi-percussion</i>						X		X
<i>Accessory</i>	X					X		

The content areas can be altered based on the student as they progress through their degree program. As students mature and formulate their own voice within percussion, they may begin to specialize in particular areas. For an exceptional student, the content plan can be altered to focus on specialized areas. For example, a student who excels on drum set and begins to focus on this area can make adjustments to the additional semester on accessory instruments to reflect their specialized area.

In regard to multi-percussion, this area is introduced in the fifth semester after the student has studied snare drum and drum set. The reason for this is because the technical and musical development in snare drum and drum set can be applied to the study of multi-percussion repertoire. While the content areas are limited to three within each semester, they can be adjusted and split in order to provide greater flexibility within the

degree plan. The eight-semester plan example provides a balance of genres and repertoire that students should be familiar with by the time they are finished with their undergraduate degree.

This curriculum was designed with the idea of one percussion teacher working with students in all areas. This allows for the teacher to assign work, track student progress, and continue refining their degree programs to reflect individual achievement. While this will require a greater amount of planning and flexibility on behalf of the teacher to assess and adjust curricular content, it will ultimately provide a solid foundation and plan within the undergraduate curriculum, which will allow for flexibility based on the individual and their needs.

## **Chapter 15: Final Thoughts on Curriculum**

The percussion curriculum does not begin and end with the applied lesson component of an undergraduate education. This is only one part of a complete education for the percussionist. Reaching students through different avenues and methods of instruction will help in solidifying their education. Technological advances, marketing and self-promotion, and the business of music are all highly relevant topics for contemporary musicians and should be incorporated into the undergraduate curriculum.

Musicians today need to have an understanding of digital audio workstations and recording equipment and how to properly utilize this technology in their professional development. High quality audio and video recording equipment is used by students in preparation for auditions, self-promotion of performances, and as a teaching aid for both the student and the teacher. Gaining practical application with audio and video within the musical world will only serve to benefit students in the future as they begin to form career goals. If a student is going to have a multi-faceted career, the necessary skill set of integrating performance, music business, and applications of technology will be essential in a contemporary music education.

There are many details in the curriculum that make the study of music as a profession unique in higher education. In the pursuit of life-long learning, the undergraduate program is the first step for many performers and educators. As educators we have to ask ourselves, what is our duty as teachers within the academy? Some may say that it is a training ground for those students who want to teach or win a job performing. It can also be said that the role of a teacher at the undergraduate level is to

refine the student as a critical thinker and artist. In either case, the study of percussion is the primary vehicle in which these ideas will be formed.

The world continues to be more diverse and inclusive, and the percussion curriculum needs to reflect the diverse culture the students experience every day. As musicians, percussionists are often responsible for living in multiple worlds from orchestral to non-western and popular musical genres. This is something that is not found in all instruments but rather is a requirement unique to percussionists. Providing the tools for continued development and artistic growth provides students the framework to make informed decision as they begin to refine their ideas and specialize in different areas.

An undergraduate curriculum that is a reflection of the contemporary cultural and musical landscape is another factor in the process of deciding what and how to teach. Within this curriculum design, there has not been an abandonment of the traditional percussion instruments, rather, the focus is now on balance within these differing areas and the intersections between them to create a well-rounded musician.

With much focus on career placement in higher education today, the arts are particularly susceptible to criticism because of increasingly scarce performance opportunities and the growing number of musicians in the field. However, this has been a discussion throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and as the field of music continues to evolve, so do the musicians working within that field. John Beck, in an article from 1969 posed a series of rhetorical questions, “Is the supply and demand for our students not out of proportion? Where are our students going to perform? Where will they make a living?”<sup>48</sup> The questions from here are nearly fifty years old and are still

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<sup>48</sup> Beck, John H. "Percussion Inflation." *National Association of College Wind and Percussion Instructors Journal* 18, no. 1 (Fall 1969): 36-39.



relevant today. How we adapt and interact within this musical world will determine how our professional goals will develop. As musicians perform, teach, compose, and collaborate, we begin to see a multi-faceted career path that many professionals create for themselves. Turning again to John Beck, “There must be a solution to this problem. I don’t have it at this time. Perhaps only time will supply the answer. In the meantime, I am going to prepare my students to be well-rounded percussionists.”<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid

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